

Answers to Gospel Questions, vol. 1

by Joseph Fielding Smith

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FOREWORD

Since May 1953, President Joseph Fielding Smith has been answering the questions of readers, in a monthly page in *The Improvement Era*, under the continuing title—"Your Question."

In his mail comes a multiplicity of questions of all kinds, pertaining to scripture, to doctrine, to history, and to the interpretation of many points and problems.

He cannot, of course, answer all the questions that come. The mail is too voluminous, the questions too repetitious, and time and strength too limited, with all the other official obligations.

But with all these limitations, President Smith has given an earnest and eminently able service in selecting from among the many, those questions which to him seem most timely, or most significant, or most frequently repeated.

In using the pages of *The Improvement Era* for this purpose, President Smith has carried forward a tradition passed on from his father, President Joseph F. Smith, who, in 1897, was one of the *Era's* first editors, and whose doctrinal and other writings appeared on the "Editor's Table" and elsewhere in the *Era*, beginning some sixty years ago. Some of those *Era* writings of President Joseph F. Smith found their way into the much read and much quoted book, *Gospel Doctrine*, which has proved so significantly useful to the Church.

And now, in this generation, we are grateful for President Joseph Fielding Smith's willingness to bring his broad background of scripture, and doctrine, and history to the Church, through the pages of *The Improvement Era*, and through the pages of this book, which carries the title *Answers to Gospel Questions*.

The Deseret Book Company has requested the privilege of collecting and publishing these writings, and

The Improvement Era, with President Smith's concurrence, has granted that privilege, to perpetuate a work that will be widely read and widely referred to, in answering "Your Question."

—RICHARD L. EVANS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Deseret Book Company wishes to express appreciation and gratitude to President Joseph Fielding Smith of the Council of the Twelve and *The Improvement Era* for permission to publish the material which has appeared in the magazine as a monthly series under the title "Your Question." During the past several years this feature has been so popular, that Deseret Book Company sought permission from President Smith and *The Improvement Era* to collect the material in book form. *Answers to Gospel Questions* is presented to Church readers with the sincere hope that it will provide answers to perplexing questions and increase knowledge of Church doctrine.

Deseret Book Company also desires to acknowledge its indebtedness to Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr. for his painstaking care and expert assistance in the planning and publication of this book.

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INTRODUCTION

From the days when Adam was driven from the Garden of Eden, the Lord has commanded that his children should seek knowledge concerning their salvation. The heavens have always been open when necessary for knowledge to be revealed and when the people sought for light in relation to their temporal and eternal salvation. It is not the will of the Lord that the heavens have been closed since the departure of the apostles nearly nineteen hundred years ago. He has always been willing to converse with man and instruct him in doctrine, and guide him in spiritual things, when man has shown a willingness to be so instructed. It is a sad reflection upon the Christian world that there has been a prevailing belief that revelation ceased and man is dependent solely upon what has been written in the scriptures as it has come down to us, unfortunately too often in imperfect form. The trouble with the Christian world since the time when Peter and his associates of the Twelve were on the earth, is that it has arrogated to itself the right to know the mind of the Lord and the plan of salvation without any further manifestation of divine power or spiritual guidance. We have been told that the "canon of scripture" is closed; that there is to be no more vision, no more coming of messengers from the divine presence, for all such things are no longer needed. Hence we find the professed followers of our Master divided, and stumbling in the dark with diverse interpretations on the "written word." The simple logic of this condition should teach us one and all that it is impossible for unity to exist in the minds of men in relation to the plan of salvation.

One prominent writer, many years ago, summed up the matter in these words:

The sum of the whole matter is this: Reason is the last arbiter; our own reason, our individual reason, my reason, nobody's else. There are various sources of authority, Bible, or Church, or God, but each one must be tested by our personal reason before it is believed. We are all of us at bottom rationalists, cannot help being. What God is, whether there be a God, we must decide by the best reason we have. If

we are made in the image of God, that image is in reason, not in body; and our little reason can and must get some true view of God, just as our little blinking myopic eyes can truly, if imperfectly, decry the infinite spangled universe. Reason may see faintly, even erringly, but it is all we have to guide us. It may rest on custom, tradition, social inheritance, the teachings from childhood of those whom we think possessed of more knowledge and judgment than we, but all our beliefs rest on such reason as we have. . . . It is by reason that we too must test the Bible as well as the Vedas, Moses as well as Hesiod or Zarathustra. If we find in our Bible anything of cosmogony, or history or morals that does not approve itself to our reason, we must reject it, we cannot help it. That did not, could not come direct from God, but came through fallible man, the framework and the chord of whose harp was constructed after the fashion of their day, and could not sound perfect music. Reason prefers our school text-book to our Bible on matters of geology and astronomy, sifts Bible history by comparison with contemporary records recovered from the sands and clay of ancient empires and reason it is that judges the teachings of Jesus to be superior to the sacrificial cult of Leviticus, or the cursings of Ezekiel and Amos. Our light is better than theirs, for our reason has more knowledge, more experience, on which to rest. The best human reason—I think I do not err—whether it looks outward or inward, finds God. (William Hays Ward, *The Independent*, March 14, 1915.)

This may be an accurate summation of the prevailing view which has dominated the thinking of men during the past few centuries and more particularly that of the present century; but it does violence to the doctrine of revelation and guidance by the Holy Ghost, which was promised to those who truly served the Lord in righteousness. This view is the natural result of the doctrines of the closed heavens. If men are left to grope in spiritual darkness guided only by their individual reasons, then confusion, disorder, contention and a million different views are the inevitable result. Far better is the counsel of our Savior to his disciples just before he left them:

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. ([John 14:13-17](#).)

Likewise we have the testimony of Moroni which thousands have put to the test:

And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things. ([Moroni 10:4-5](#).)

It is a dreadful thought to believe that our Eternal Father thinks so little of us that he leaves us to guide ourselves, falteringly, blindly groping, with no help but our weak, uncertain power to reason out the eternal plan of salvation. The Lord has not forsaken the inhabitants of the world, they have forsaken him. In the very beginning he said to Adam that he was to teach the glorious truths of the gospel to his children, and this Adam faithfully did. We read however—

And Adam and Eve blessed the name of God, and they made all things known unto their sons and their

daughters.

And Satan came among them, saying: I am also a son of God; and he commanded them, saying: Believe it not; and they believed it not, and they loved Satan more than God. And men began from that time forth to be carnal, sensual, and devilish.

And the Lord God called upon men by the Holy Ghost everywhere and commanded them that they should repent;

And as many as believed in the Son, and repented of their sins, should be saved, and as many as believed not and repented not, should be damned; and the words went forth out of the mouth of God in a firm decree; wherefore they must be fulfilled.([Moses 5:12-15.](#))

The Lord has commanded the members of the Church in this day to seek him by prayer, by faith and study. We have been commanded to study the commandments he has given us in the Doctrine and Covenants([D. & C. 1:37.](#)) in the Book of Mormon([3 Nephi 23:1-5](#); [26:6-11.](#)) and in all the scriptures, with the promise that "Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life . . . , it will rise with us in the resurrection. And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come."([D. & C. 130:18-19.](#)) Notwithstanding these commandments it has always been a difficult problem to get the members of the Church, with few exceptions, to study diligently the revelations and the commandments that have been given for our eternal blessing. The Savior said to the Jews: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."([John 5:39.](#)) How many members of the Church *think* likewise, but fail to prepare themselves by study and by faith? The Lord has revealed to us all things pertaining to our salvation that are expedient and that we should know in order to give him the proper service and find the way back into his presence.

And I give unto you a commandment that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom.

Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand.

Of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms—

That ye may be prepared in all things when I shall send you again to magnify the calling whereunto I have called you, and the mission with which I have commissioned you.([D. & C. 88:77-80.](#))

The Lord said to the Nephites:

. . . And there shall be no disputations among you, as there have hitherto been; neither shall there be disputations among you concerning the points of my doctrine, as there have hitherto been.

For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another.

Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another; but this is my doctrine, that such things should be done away.([3 Nephi 11:28-30.](#))

If the members of the Church would search their scriptures more intensely in the spirit of humility and prayer, disputations would cease among us. It seems to be a difficult thing to eliminate from the minds of some of our brethren cherished notions that are contrary to the revealed word. Many questions have been answered time and time again by those who have the knowledge and are prepared to give the answers, yet the error continues to exist. At this point it is not amiss to mention the fact that there are numerous fictitious "visions" and "manifestations" that have been palmed off on the people. These have been denied and corrected time and time again, yet they still persist. We have been taught from the beginning, and the Lord has proclaimed it, that when he has some revelation for the Church it will come through the divinely appointed source. Why is it that some members of the Church grasp at every sensational rumor with apparent eagerness and delight? If the same eagerness were applied to the revelations already given and we would heed them soberly and in humility of spirit, all would be well. The Lord has promised the Church "commandments not a few, and revelations in their time," ([D. & C. 59:4](#).) yet we have some clamoring for more revelation when we have failed to keep those already given. The Lord said to Nephi—and this not many years after Lehi landed on this American continent —

Behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and there will be no more doctrine given until after he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh. And when he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh, the things which he shall say unto you shall ye observe to do.

And now I, Nephi, cannot say more: the Spirit stoppeth mine utterance, and I am left to mourn because of the unbelief, and the wickedness, and the ignorance, and the stiffneckedness of men; for they will not search knowledge, nor understand great knowledge, when it is given unto them in plainness, even as plain as word can be. ([2 Nephi 32:6-7](#).)

The Lord told Jeremiah:

. . . After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. ([Jeremiah 31:33-34](#).)

That will be the day spoken of by Isaiah, when peace and righteousness shall rule the earth.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. ([Isaiah 11:9](#).)

Can we not hasten that day by manifesting a little more faith, a little more desire to seek for knowledge and a little more obedience to the commandment, "to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life?"

The Lord has told us to take heed, "walking uprightly before me, considering the end of your salvation, doing all things with prayer and thanksgiving, that ye may not be seduced by evil spirits, or doctrines of devils, or the commandments of men; for some are of men, and others of devils. Wherefore, beware lest ye are deceived; and that ye may not be deceived seek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given." ([D. & C. 46:7-8](#).)

From time to time members of the Church are deceived and led astray because they have no substantial foundation in faith, and lack knowledge of the gospel. Skilful deceivers, under these conditions, prey upon the weak and destroy the little measure of faith which they possess. Therefore it behooves us all to be alert, diligent and studious, doing all things in prayer and humility. Then we can overcome the world.

Alma has given good advice in his counsel to Zeezrom:

. . . It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him.

And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full.

And they that will harden their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction. Now this is what is meant by the chains of hell.([Alma 12:9-11](#).)

The reason for these answers to questions is to endeavor to settle once and for all time the problems discussed, which occur and re-occur so frequently, yet are answered in the revelations in the Standard Works; moreover with the thought in mind to stimulate members of the Church to spend a little more of their spare time in personal search. Of far more profit is a fact discovered by research than by information received. The impression on the mind lasts longer.

—Joseph Fielding Smith

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1

The Personages in the Godhead

Question: *"I would like to have you help me explain for an investigator what the last sentence in the testimony of the three witnesses of the Book of Mormon means when it says: 'And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God.'*

"I was puzzled for a moment but told him that surely the three witnesses knew of the first vision of the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and therefore knew that they were separate personages, but they were one in purpose and unity. He did not say whether he accepted or rejected what I said, but I was not completely satisfied."

Answer: A careful reading of this testimony reveals the fact that the three men understood clearly the individualistic nature of the members of the Godhead. Moreover, Oliver Cowdery had written most of the manuscript of the Book of Mormon, which he could not have done without becoming acquainted with the fact that the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost are three separate Personages.

We find similar expressions to this of the witnesses in other scriptures; in the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Bible; for instance, Moses, by divine revelation, declared to Israel that there is but one God whom we shall worship. Yet Moses knew that it was Christ (Jehovah) who led Israel from Egypt to the land of Canaan, and that he is God.([Deuteronomy 6:3-4](#) .)

In the Doctrine and Covenants we find this written:

As well as those who should come after, who should believe in the gifts and callings of God by the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of the Father and of the Son;

Which Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God, infinite and eternal, without end. Amen.

And we know that all men must repent and believe on the name of Jesus Christ, and worship the Father in his name, and endure in faith on his name to the end, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God. ([D. & C. 20:27-29.](#))

This is very clear, and there is no confounding of the Personages of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Therefore the statement that they are "one God" must refer to something other than that they are "one essence" and "without body parts and passions" as so many Christian people believe.

SUPREME COUNCIL COMPOSED OF THREE PERSONAGES

This reference, then, to the three as one God, must be interpreted to mean that they constitute *one* Godhead or Supreme Council, composed of three separate Personages, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Paul, in his epistle to the Corinthian saints, says this:

As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. ([1 Corinthians 8:4.](#))

Paul knew as well as any man could know it that the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost constitute one Supreme Council—one God. In the following verses he adds this:

For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. (*Ibid.*, 8:5-6.)

Here Paul speaks of both the Father and Son as God. Near the close of his epistle to the Roman saints, he said:

And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. ([Romans 16:20.](#))

The "God of peace," who according to the scriptures is to bruise Satan, is Jesus Christ. ([Genesis 3:15;](#) [Hebrews 2:14.](#))

It is very strange that Christian people can be confused and believe that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one substance or entity, in the face of the constant repetition in the New Testament of the evidence which clearly proclaims them separate and distinct from each other. It appears to those who are guided by the light of truth, that the frequent declarations of the Savior that he and his Father are distinct from each other, but one in thought and action, is so plain that even the most simple should understand it. Our Redeemer was constantly addressing his Father in prayer. He taught his disciples to pray to the Father, not to him, and the most touching and tender appeal that was ever recorded is his prayer to his Father in the seventeenth chapter of John.

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has

sent

And now Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. . . .

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. . . .

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are. ([John 17:3](#), [5](#), [11](#), [22](#).)

How plain it is that the Father and Son are separate Personages, yet one in power, wisdom and unity. Hence they are, with the Holy Spirit which carries out their will—one God or Presiding Council!

Then there are the words to Mary at the tomb, so distinctly declaring the separate Personages of Father and Son:

Jesus said unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. ([John 20:17](#).)

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2

The Savior and Adam in the Pre-existence

Question: *"Did the Savior and Adam exist on another planet as mortal beings before they came to this earth?"*

"These people say that Brigham Young states that Adam was brought from another planet, with a mortal body, and that the Savior came with a resurrected body because he said that he had power to lay down his life and power to take it up again, and inasmuch as the Savior states he had helped to create other worlds that he had to be a resurrected being to organize an earth."

"I am satisfied from the scriptures we have that Adam and the Savior were just the same in the pre-existence as we were and that Adam had only a spiritual body until God organized a body for him, and that the Savior had only a spiritual body until he was born of a mortal mother; but I want authority from you."

Answer: We will treat the question of Adam first. Adam was among the intelligences spoken of by the Lord to Abraham who were appointed to be rulers on this earth. He was Michael, a prince, and son of God chosen to come to this earth and stand at the head of his posterity, holding the "keys of salvation under the counsel and direction of the Holy One, who is without beginning of days or end of life." ([D. & C. 78:16](#).) This Holy One is Jesus Christ. On the earth Michael was known as Adam. In the pre-existent state he was a spirit like the others of our Father's children. In the Book of Genesis ([Genesis 1:26](#); [2:7](#).) we are told that Adam obtained his body from the dust of the earth, and that he was not subject to death is inferred in the commandment the Lord gave him, that if he transgressed the divine commandment and ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he should surely die. ([Gen., 2:17](#)) In the Book

of Mormon([2 Nephi 2:22](#).) we are positively informed that Adam would have lived forever in the garden if he had not partaken of the forbidden fruit. So Adam was in no sense mortal until after his transgression. That his immortal spirit came from another world is verily true, just as it is true of each one of us, for we all lived in the spirit existence before we came into this world and obtained bodies which inherited mortality through the fall of Adam.

We are also informed in the scriptures that before Adam and Eve transgressed they were without children, and the fall was essential to the peopling of the earth with their offspring. When the truth in relation to the consequences of the fall were made known to Adam and Eve, they rejoiced, and Eve said:

. . . Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient.([Moses 5:11](#).)

Lehi also understood this truth, and he said:

Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.([2 Nephi 2:25](#).)

ADAM A PRE-EXISTENT SPIRIT

In an article published in *The Improvement Era*(*Improvement Era*, Vol. 13, pp. 75-81.) President Joseph F. Smith and his counselors John R. Winder and Anthon H. Lund said the following in relation to Adam:

Adam; our progenitor; the first man, was like Christ, a pre-existent spirit, and like Christ he took upon him an appropriate body, the body of a man, a "living soul." The doctrine of the pre-existence—revealed so plainly, particularly in latter days—pours a wonderful flood of light upon the otherwise mysterious problem of man's origin. It shows that a man, as a spirit, was begotten and born of heavenly parents, and reared to maturity in the eternal mansions of the Father, prior to coming upon the earth in a temporal body to undergo experience in mortality. It teaches that all men existed in the spirit before any man existed in the flesh, and that all who have inhabited the earth since Adam have taken bodies and become souls in like manner.

It is held by some that Adam was not the first man upon this earth, and that the original human was a development from lower orders of the animal creation. These, however, are the theories of men. The word of the Lord declares that Adam was "the first man of all men,"([Moses 1:34](#).) and we are therefore in duty bound to regard him as the primal parent of our race.

Joseph F. Smith
John R. Winder
Anthon H. Lund.

First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

CHRIST CREATED THE WORLDS

In relation to Jesus Christ it is sufficient to say that we know that he was the Creator, under the direction and commandment of his Father, of this world and many other worlds. John in the introduction to his Gospel said this:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . .

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.([John 1:1](#), [3-4](#).)

A plainer translation could be given, but this will suffice. In the Doctrine and Covenants we find the following:

Thus saith the Lord your God, even Jesus Christ, the Great I AM, Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the same which looked upon the wide expanse of eternity, and all the seraphic hosts of heaven, before the world was made;

The same which knoweth all things, for all things are present before mine eyes;

I am the same which spake, and the world was made, and all things came by me.([D. & C. 38:1-3](#).)

In the writings of Moses this is recorded:

And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten.([Moses 1:33](#).)

CREATION ACCOMPLISHED WHILE SAVIOR WAS A SPIRIT

These great works and this wonderful experience all came before our Savior had a physical body. This work was done by him when he was a Spirit. It is an erroneous notion without any foundation in truth to think that Jesus had to be clothed with a body of flesh and bones before any work could be performed by him.

When the Lord appeared to the brother of Jared, he showed him his body. It was the body of his Spirit, and it was in the exact form of his tabernacle when he walked the streets and highways of Palestine. ([Ether 3](#).) The only physical body of flesh and bones he ever had was the body born of Mary in the village of Bethlehem, which in his resurrection became inseparably connected with his spiritual body.

The Prophet Joseph Smith said the doctrine of reincarnation is a doctrine of the devil.(Smith, Joseph Fielding, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 105.)

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3

The Meaning of "Son of Man"

Question: "*In [Matthew 20:28](#), we find the following: 'Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.' What is the correct meaning of the term 'Son of Man?' The marginal reference leads me to [Philippians 2:7](#), which is as follows: 'But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.' Are we to understand that 'Son of man' has reference to the fact that Jesus came into the world 'in the likeness of men' or became mortal? If not, what does it mean?*"

In each of the four gospels we read where the Savior frequently refers to himself as "the Son of man."

Invariably in the New Testament, the common noun, "Man," is printed with a lower case "m." This is very likely due to the fact that the scholars who did the translating did not understand the significance of this expression. Seemingly, they took the view as you have expressed it, that it has reference to the fact that our Lord became a man and while on the earth appeared as a man. You will realize that for centuries the prevailing notion that God, when speaking of either the Father or the Son, was without body and was not in the form of man, except as our Lord appeared among man in his earth ministry.

The expression should be written, "Son of Man," with a capital "M," meaning Son of God. In revelations given to the Prophet Joseph, the Savior uses this term when speaking of himself. See the [Doctrines and Covenants, 45:39; 49:6, 22; 63:53; 68:11](#). There are other occasions when our Lord called himself "Son Ahman." See sections [78:20](#) and [95:17](#).

This title given to the Savior may have been common in the days of the antediluvian saints. It is recorded in the Pearl of Great Price, that Enoch saw generation after generation down through time, and we read, ". . . Enoch was high and lifted up, even in the bosom of the Father, and of the Son of Man; and behold, the power of Satan was upon all the face of the earth." ([Moses 7:24](#).) Then in [verse 54](#) we read, "And it came to pass that Enoch cried unto the Lord, saying: When the Son of Man cometh in the flesh, shall the earth rest? I pray thee, show me these things." From these words written long before the advent of Jesus Christ on the earth, it would appear that he was known by this title in that day.

THE LORD'S COUNSEL TO ADAM

We have received other definite information in the counsel the Lord gave to Adam, as recorded in [Moses 6:57](#), which is as follows:

Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence; for, in the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is his name, and the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ, a righteous Judge, who shall come in the meridian of time.

Here the Father speaks to Adam of himself as a Man, whose name is "Man of Holiness." Therefore, we are justified in saying of Jesus when referring to himself as Son of Man, he means that he is verily the Son of God who is Man of Holiness, or Holy Man.

Incidentally we learn that the place where Adam dwelt, and where he blessed his righteous descendants three years before his death, and where the Lord appeared to him, was named Adam-ondi-Ahman. May we not in truth say that the meaning of this name Adam-ondi-Ahman is, the place, or land, of God where Adam dwelt?

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4

Jesus Our Advocate and Our Mediator

Question: *"Will you be kind enough to answer the following question? Who is it that speaks to Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Moses and the Prophets of the Old Testament? Is it our Eternal Father or Jesus who was known as Jehovah? We have had several discussions on this question, but we seem to be*

hopelessly divided. Some of our members maintain that it is Jesus Christ who represented the Father, others that it was the Father himself."

Answer: This is one question that constantly recurs, notwithstanding the clearness of our scriptures on this point and the repeated answers that have been given during the past century. At the October Conference of the Church in 1953 the writer took this subject as his text. These remarks were published in the *Conference Proceedings*, and in the following December *Improvement Era*. In substance it had been published several times since the restoration of the gospel and treated in discourses many times. This discourse of October 1953 is here repeated in full:

"If I may have the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord, I wish to speak of our Redeemer as our Advocate and our Mediator. I think that quite generally we do not understand his mission as fully in this regard as it is possible for us to do.

"In the sixth chapter of Exodus there is a statement which is a mis-translation which I will read to you:

'And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him I am the Lord:

'And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.'[\(Exodus 6:2-3.\)](#)

"Now the Hebrew scriptures inform us that he referred to himself and is referred to throughout the Old Testament as Jehovah, so this cannot be a correct translation. It should read:

'And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord:

'And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob. I am the Lord God Almighty, the Lord Jehovah, and was not my name known among them?'(See [Inspired Version, Exodus 6:2-3.](#))

"That changes the whole meaning of it.

MEANING OF ADVOCATE AND MEDIATOR

"Now an advocate is one who defends or pleads for or in behalf of another. A mediator is one who reconciles or brings about agreement between parties. I want to read one or two passages of scripture on this point.

'Lift up your hearts and be glad, for I am in your midst, and am your advocate with the Father; and it is his good will to give you the kingdom.'[\(D. & C. 29:5.\)](#)

'Listen to him who is the advocate with the Father, who is pleading your cause before him—

'Saying: Father, behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin, in whom thou wast well pleased; behold the blood of thy Son which was shed, the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified.'[\(Ibid., 45:3-4.\)](#)

'Behold, and hearken, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, even Jesus Christ, your advocate, who knoweth the weakness of man and how to succor them who are tempted.'[\(Ibid., 62:1.\)](#)

'I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father.'[\(Ibid., 110:4.\)](#)

'These are they who are just men made perfect through Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, who

wrought out this perfect atonement through the shedding of his own blood.'*(Ibid., 76:69.)*

'The power and authority of the higher, or Melchizedek Priesthood, is to hold the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church—

'To have the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, to have the heavens opened unto them, to commune with the general assembly and church of the Firstborn, and to enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.'*(Ibid., 107:18-19.)*

"This from the [First Epistle of John, Verse 1, Chapter 2](#):

'My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.'

"Paul wrote to Timothy as follows:

'For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

'Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.'[\(1 Timothy 2:5-6.\)](#)

ADAM WAS BANISHED FROM PRESENCE OF GOD

"When Adam was in the Garden of Eden he was in the presence of God, our Father. He learned his language. The first part of Genesis dealing with the creation and with Adam in the Garden of Eden is when the Father was present with him.

"After he was driven out of the Garden of Eden the scene changed. Adam was banished because of his transgression from the presence of the Father. The scriptures say he became spiritually dead—that is, he was shut out from the presence of God.

"From that time on Jesus Christ comes on the scene as our advocate, pleading for us as our mediator through his ministry and labors to reconcile us, to bring us into agreement with God, his Father.

"This is part of his great mission. He stands between the Father and man. He pleads our cause. You know, when he was upon the earth he prayed frequently, and he prayed for his disciples, pleading with his Father in their behalf, and he has been pleading ever since, and he stands between us and God, our Father.

"I would like to call your attention to one little thing in the first vision of the Prophet Joseph Smith. It is very significant, and Joseph Smith did not know it. If he had been perpetrating a fraud, he would not have thought of it. You will recall in your reading that the Father and the Son appeared, and the Father introduced the Son and told the Prophet to hear the Son.

"Now suppose the Prophet had come back from the woods and had said the Father and the Son appeared to him, and the Father said, 'Joseph, what do you want?' and when he asked the question and told him what he wanted, the Father had answered him; then we would know that the story of the Prophet could not be true.

"All revelation comes through Jesus Christ. I have not time to go into the scriptures and give references for that, but that is the fact. He it was who led Israel, and if I do not procrastinate upon the time, I will take the rest of it to read to you the statement from President George Q. Cannon, bearing on this point.

STATEMENT OF PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON

'There is in modern Christendom a strong tendency to ascribe to the Father visits and communications with mankind that were really made by the Lord Jesus. There is even a respectable percentage of the members of his Church, established in these days, who have the idea that it was the Father and not the Son who appeared to the patriarchs and prophets of old, who delivered Israel from Egypt, who gave the law on Sinai, and who was the guide and inspirer of the ancient seers. This was not the understanding of the true servants of God either before or after his coming. Those who preceded the advent of the Messiah understood that he whom they worshipped as Jehovah should in due time tabernacle in the flesh, and the writings of Justin Martyr and other of the early fathers show that this was the belief of the early Christian Church on the eastern continent. The writings of the Hebrew prophets, as we have them in the Bible, are perhaps not as plain on this point as are those of the Nephite seers that are revealed to us in the Book of Mormon. But we have in this latter record some quotations from the earlier Hebrew prophets that make this point very clear. Nephi writes:

"And the God of our fathers, who were led out of Egypt, out of bondage, and also were preserved in the wilderness by him, yea, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, yieldeth himself, according to the words of the angel, as a man, into the hands of wicked men, to be lifted up, according to the words of Zenock, and to be crucified, according to the words of Neum, and to be buried in a sepulcher, according to the words of Zenos. . . . ([1 Nephi 19:10.](#))

'Here we have the testimony of Zenock, Neum, and Zenos that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was by wicked man to be lifted up, crucified and afterwards buried in a sepulchre, showing that these ancient worthies understood that it was the God of Israel who should come to his own. Nephi who himself was a Hebrew and the son of a prophet of the same race, also testifies in the above passage that it was the same God of their fathers who led them out of Egypt and preserved them in the wilderness. About four hundred years later another Nephite seer, King Benjamin, testifies that an angel came to him and made this glorious promise:

"For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases."([Mosiah 3:5.](#))

'A little further on he says:

"And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning; and his mother shall be called Mary.

"And lo, he cometh unto his own, that salvation might come unto the children of men even through faith on his name; and even after all this they shall consider him a man, and say that he hath a devil, and shall scourge him, and shall consider him a man, and say that he hath a devil, and shall scourge him, and shall crucify him."([Exodus 6:2-3.](#)
[Ibid., 3:8-9.](#))([Exodus 6:2-3.](#)
[Ibid., 3:8-9.](#))

'But we have the word of the Savior himself on this point that puts controversy to an end. When, after his resurrection and ascension into heaven, he first appeared to his Nephite disciples on this land, he declared,

"Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world. . . .

"I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world."
([Exodus 6:2-3](#).
[3 Nephi 11:10, 14](#).)([Exodus 6:2-3](#).
3 Nephi 11:10, 14.)

'Later during his ministry among the Nephites he affirms:

"Behold, I say unto you that the law is fulfilled that was given unto Moses.

"Behold, I am he that gave the law, and I am he who covenanted with my people Israel; therefore the law in me is fulfilled. . . ."(*Ibid.*, 15:4-5.)

'Should any still have a lingering doubt that the Jehovah who revealed himself to Abraham, to Moses, and to others was any other than he whom we know in the flesh as Jesus Christ, that doubt is set at rest by the revelation given in these days. In the vision seen by the Prophet Joseph Smith and by Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple, 3rd. of April 1836, the following appears:

"We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us; and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber.

"His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying:

"I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father."(*Ibid.*, 15:4-5.
[D. & C. 110:2-4](#).)

'Somewhat curiously an ancient Syriac manuscript has within the last few months been unearthed that is known as the gospel of the Twelve Apostles. Whether the Twelve Apostles had anything to do with writing it has nothing to do with the point under consideration. The writing was originally in Hebrew, and what we wish to draw attention to is that whenever the manuscript was first written the writers of the original believed that Jesus was he who spake with the ancient Israelites. It commences:

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, according as it was said by the Holy Spirit, I send an angel before his face, who will prepare his way.

"It came to pass in the 309th year of Alexander, the son of Philip the Macedonian, in the reign of Tiberius Caesar, in the government of Herod, the ruler of the Jews, that the Angel Gabriel, the chief of the angels, by command of God went down to Nazareth to a virgin called Miriam, of the tribe of Judah the son of Israel (her who was betrothed to Joseph the Just) and he appeared to her and said, 'Lo there ariseth from thee the one who spake with our fathers, and he shall be a Savior to Israel; and they who do not confess him shall perish, for his authority is in the lofty heights, and his kingdom does not pass away.' "

"The Lord bless you all I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen."

PROPHET'S VISION CONTRARY TO RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

There are a few other matters of vital importance closely related to this subject and the Prophet Joseph Smith's vision of the Father and the Son, which may be discussed here.

When Joseph Smith went out to the grove to pray, he had no idea that the Father and the Son were separate Personages. His religious training had been solely along the lines of the sectarian Protestant and Catholic world. This doctrine proclaimed with apparent assurance that the Father and the Son were *one*; that God was a Spirit in some mysterious form that could not be understood, and definitely not an anthropomorphic being. The current doctrine was that God was invisible to mortal eyes.

We may well believe that when the youthful prophet knelt and prayed he never expected such a visitation, which was contrary to the universal religious views in his day. Evidently his mind was not clear as to how an answer would be received. Possibly he could have thought he might hear a voice or even that an angel might appear to him, as angels once appeared in ancient times. That he would receive a visitation from both Father and Son absolutely could not have entered his mind. Their presence, therefore, must have been just as great a shock to him as his repeating it to certain ministers must have been to them. For telling it he was severely rebuked and accused of blasphemy.

Without doubt, one of the chief reasons for the coming of both Father and Son was to establish the great truth which was lost to the world, that the declaration of the scriptures is true, and that once again there was to be a witness in the flesh to bear testimony to the world. Through the mixture of the gospel with pagan philosophy, the true nature of God had been lost. It was necessary that it be restored again through the presence of a living witness. There were other reasons, of course, why the Lord should have living witnesses on the earth. The time had come for the light of the gospel to break through the dark clouds of superstition and false philosophy.

If the story of Joseph Smith had been a concoction, an imaginary story of his mind, he never would have said that both the Father and the Son appeared to him, and that they were glorious Personages beyond mortal description. Moreover, he never would have said that the Father introduced his Son, saying: "This is my Beloved Son: Hear Him." Had the prophet's story been a falsehood, he would have said more likely, "The Father addressed me and asked me what I wanted." He would have said the Father gave him the answer! Had he said such a thing, then we would have known that he was not telling the truth. Such a thing as this would have stamped the story as fiction, for it would be contrary to the divine law by which Jesus becomes our Advocate and Mediator. The Prophet made no mistake and had his story been false *that mistake he inevitably would have made!* It would have been in perfect harmony with the universal misunderstanding of the Godhead which existed in that day. (*Ibid.*, 15:4-5. For further reference on this subject see Smith, Joseph Fielding, *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, Chapter 2, and *Man: His Origin and Destiny*, chapter 14.)

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5

The Least in the Kingdom

Question: "*It is said of John the Baptist that among all that were born of women there was none greater than he, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than he. We do not understand how this could be. Will you please give us an answer?*"

Answer: This saying is in reference to the Savior's estimate of John as recorded in [Luke 7:28](#), after the disciples of John had come to him and said: "John the Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" ([Luke 7:20](#).) Later the Savior bore testimony to the greatness

of the mission of John, which testimony is recorded in [Luke 7:28](#).

At a meeting held in the Nauvoo Temple, Sunday, January 29, 1843, the Prophet Joseph Smith gave the answer to this question. He had been asked to do so at a meeting the week before, when time would not permit of an answer. We quote the full report of the Prophet's remarks:

The question arose from the saying of Jesus, "Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." [[Luke 7:28](#).] How is it that John was considered one of the greatest prophets? His miracles could not have constituted his greatness.

First. He was entrusted with a divine mission of preparing the way before the face of the Lord. Whoever had such a trust committed to him before or since? No man.

Secondly. He was entrusted with the important mission, and it was required at his hands, to baptize the Son of Man. Whoever had the honor of doing that? Whoever had so great a privilege and glory? Whoever led the Son of God into the waters of baptism, and had the privilege of beholding the Holy Ghost descend in the form of a dove, or rather in the *sign* of the dove, in witness of that administration? The sign of the dove was instituted before the creation of the world, a witness for the Holy Ghost, and the devil cannot come in the sign of a dove. The Holy Ghost is a personage, and is in the form of a personage. It does not confine itself to the *form* of the dove, but in *sign* of the dove. The Holy Ghost cannot be transformed into a dove; but the sign of a dove was given to John to signify the truth of the deed, as the dove is an emblem or token of truth and innocence.

LEGAL ADMINISTRATOR OF THE KINGDOM

Thirdly. John, at that time was the only legal administrator in the affairs of the kingdom there was then on the earth, and holding the keys of power. The Jews had to obey his instructions or be damned, by their own law; and Christ himself fulfilled all righteousness in becoming obedient to the law which he had given to Moses on the mount, and thereby magnified it and made it honorable instead of destroying it. The son of Zacharias wrested the keys, the kingdom, the power, the glory from the Jews, by the holy anointing and decree of heaven, and these three reasons constitute him the greatest prophet born of a woman.

Second question:—How was the least in the kingdom of heaven greater than he?

In reply I asked—Whom did Jesus have reference to as being the least? Jesus was looked upon as having the least claim in God's kingdom, and [seemingly] was least entitled to their credulity as a prophet: as though he had said—"He that is considered the least among you is greater than John—that is I myself!" (*D.H.C.*, Vol. 5, pp. 260-61; *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 275-276.)

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Question: "The scripture in [Revelation 19:7](#) speaks of the marriage of the Lamb. This has puzzled one of my investigators and I have tried hard to find an answer for her. Can you help me?"

Answer: The scriptural passage under question is in the nature of symbolic language which is not to be taken literally as a marriage between a man and a woman. The full text is essential to our correct understanding and is as follows:

And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Al-le-lu-ia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. (*D.H.C.*, Vol. 5, pp. 260-261; *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 275-276. Revelation 19:5-9)

A FIGURE OF SPEECH

This prophecy of the marriage of the Lamb is a figure of speech, having reference to the second coming of our Savior and the feast, or supper, that the righteous shall receive at his coming. When teaching the Jews, and more especially his disciples, the Savior spoke of the bridegroom when referring to himself. Such references are found in [Matthew 9:15](#); [Mark 2:19-20](#), and in the story of the ten virgins in [Matthew 25](#).

In Revelation, Chapter 21, the comparison is made to a marriage of the Lamb with the city, New Jerusalem:

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God,

Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. (*Ibid.*, 21:2, 3, 9, 10, 11.)

THE SECOND COMING OF OUR LORD

In the [Doctrine and Covenants, Section 109, verses 73 and 74](#), we find the following:

That thy church may come forth out of the wilderness of darkness, and shine forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners;

And be adorned as a bride for that day when thou shalt unveil the heavens, and cause the mountains to flow down at thy presence, and the valleys to be exalted, the rough places made smooth; that thy glory may fill the earth.

The vision of John and the revelation to Joseph Smith both have reference to the same event, the second coming of our Lord in his power and glory, to receive his Church or kingdom, the New Jerusalem being the capital city of the Church, and there is no difference in the meaning whether reference is to the Church or the New Jerusalem, for the righteous will have inheritance in the New Jerusalem. Therefore the bride of the Lamb is the organization of the righteous who have inheritance in the holy city.

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8

Why Did Jesus Come Alive Again?

Question: *"While telling the story of the resurrection of Jesus, one of the children asked, 'Why did Jesus come alive again?' The only answer I could give was that he was so good that he just could not stay dead. I have read the scriptures on the crucifixion, but cannot seem to get the full reason for the necessity of his death, and how he had the power over death. Will you please explain this to me as it is given in the scriptures?"*

Answer: The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ form the very foundation of the plan of salvation. They are the most fundamental doctrines of all the teachings in the scriptures. It is essential that every member of the Church have a perfect understanding of the reason why Jesus came into the world and the nature of his mission. The responsibility for this instruction rests primarily with the parents, but it is also necessary that it be taught in our auxiliary organizations as well as in priesthood classes.

The plan of salvation was prepared before the foundation of our earth was laid. We were then the spirit children of our Eternal Father. In the course of our progression it was necessary that we have the privilege of coming to this earth and here receive our bodies of flesh and bones and pass through this period of mortality where we are subject to all the conditions we find in his life: pleasure and pain, happiness and sorrow, and be tried and tempted to see if we would be true to our Eternal Father and keep his commandments when we were not in his presence as we kept them when we were spirits living in his presence. This earth is a probationary state, or a place prepared where we are tested and given the privilege of walking by faith, that we may become worthy to return to our Father to dwell in his presence, and become his eternal sons and daughters.

ADAM AND EVE AS FIRST PARENTS

The great honor to come here and be the first parents of all men was given to Adam and Eve. They

were placed by the Father in the Garden of Eden where there was no death. Adam and Eve in the condition in which they were when placed in the Garden of Eden could have lived there forever if they had not broken a law, but they would have lived alone and would have had no children. ([2 Nephi 2:22-25](#); [Moses 5:11](#).) The Lord told them they could eat the fruit of every tree in the garden except the fruit of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil," and if they did eat this fruit they would surely die. Satan tempted them and they ate this fruit and broke this commandment. By doing this a change came over their bodies and they became subject to death, as the Lord has said, and they were driven out of the garden. After they were driven out children were born to them and they have spread over all the earth. All the children inherited death from our first parents, so we will all have to die as our ancestors have done before us. This made it necessary that something be done to redeem us from death and restore us to life again where there would be no death, for this transgression of Adam and Eve placed all of us subject to Satan's power after death. The Lord has told us through his prophets that if some remedy was not provided to restore life our spirits would become subject to Satan forever and he would have ruled over us while our bodies would have remained in the grave forever. Both justice and mercy demanded that this broken law which brought death would have to be mended to defeat Satan and bring us back to receive the mercies of our Eternal Father.

REDEMPTION FROM DEATH PREPARED IN PLAN

The means provided for our redemption from death were prepared in the plan of salvation before Adam and Eve were sent to the earth, and Jesus Christ volunteered to come and atone for this transgression and thus gain the victory over the devil. Therefore, he is called the "Lamb of God," who was chosen to be slain "from the foundation of the world." ([Revelation 13:8](#); [1 Peter 1:19](#).) The only way this atonement could be made was for Jesus who was chosen to pay the debt to justice and mercy, and redeem us from the grasp of Satan, to come into the world with power over death, for no one who was under the bondage of death could pay the debt and restore us to live forever. Jesus was the only person who ever came into this world who had power over death, and having that great power, by the shedding of his blood on the cross he could redeem us and get the power of the resurrection. After he came forth from the tomb he had all power to call every other person forth from the grave. And after he came forth, on the third day after his crucifixion, he opened the graves of the righteous saints who had lived from the days of Adam to the time of his crucifixion.

He had declared to Martha that he is the resurrection and the life ([John 11:25-26](#).) and this he taught to his disciples. Jacob, the brother of Nephi, has given us a very clear understanding of the mission of Jesus Christ and how he came to redeem us from death and from Satan. This is found in the second book of Nephi, Chapter nine, which all who consider what is here written should read carefully. He explains how we would have been angels to the devil, without the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and now because of the mercies of our Heavenly Father and his beloved Son Jesus Christ, we have escaped from the grasp of this great monster.

CHRIST RECEIVED LIFE FROM HIS FATHER

A word or two showing how it was possible for Jesus Christ to come and redeem us is necessary at this point. Jesus had no father of the flesh, that is who was mortal and subject to death. Our Eternal Father to whom we pray is the Father of the body of Jesus Christ and from his Father he inherited life and death was always subject to him. He had the power to lay down his life, because he was the Son of Mary who was like us, mortal, and he had the power to take his life up again for that power was in him. In his teachings to the Jews and his disciples he frequently told them of this power and of his mission. On one occasion he said:

For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

And hath given him authority to execute judgment also,

because he is the Son of man [God].([John 5:26-27](#).)

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.(*Ibid.*, 10:17-18.)

I hope I have made this matter clear to all teachers of children, for they must have the correct understanding of the doctrine of the resurrection, and how we became redeemed through the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ.

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9

Alma on the Resurrection

Question: *"In our class we were discussing our Manual Lesson 8, 'If a man die, shall he live again?' When we mentioned that Moroni and Peter and James appeared to Joseph Smith as resurrected beings, a member who was visiting our class took issue with this, stating that they could not have been resurrected. He based his argument upon the passage in [Alma 40:19](#), which he interpreted as meaning that all who died before the time of Christ, both the wicked and the righteous, without reservation, must be resurrected before any of those who lived after the time of Christ.*

"Our adamant visitor still maintained that Alma specifically supports his argument unequivocally.

What I want to know is how [Alma 40:19](#), should be interpreted in view of Elder Talmage's explanation concerning the order of the resurrection?"

Answer: The visiting member should read his scriptures more carefully. It is true that Alma in Chapter 40, verse 19, did not make his meaning clear and if we deal with that verse only, it is easy to obtain the thought that all who died before the Savior's coming were to come forth at the time of the Savior's resurrection, both the wicked as well as the righteous. Verse 20, however, makes it plain that Alma did not intend to say that *all* the dead were to come forth at that time, and he therefore modified his first remark and said it was his "opinion" that the souls and the bodies are reunited "*of the righteous*," at the resurrection of Christ, and his ascension into heaven. It is evident Alma's understanding of the extent of the resurrection at the time the Savior came forth from the dead was limited, therefore he stated only his opinion.

The Prophet Abinadi, when before King Noah and his priests, made this matter very clear in speaking of this first resurrection in the following words:

And now, the resurrection of all the prophets, and all those that have believed in their words, or all those that have kept the commandments of God, shall come forth in the first resurrection; therefore, they are the first resurrection.

They are raised to dwell with God who has redeemed them; thus they have eternal life through Christ,

who has broken the bands of death.

And these are those who have part in the first resurrection and these are they that have died before Christ came, in their ignorance, not having salvation declared unto them. And thus the Lord bringeth about the restoration of these; and they have a part in the first resurrection, or have eternal life, being redeemed by the Lord.

And little children also have eternal life.

But behold, and fear, and tremble before God, for ye ought to tremble; for the Lord redeemeth none such that rebel against him and die in their sins; yea, even all those that have perished in their sins ever since the world began, that have wilfully rebelled against God, that have known the commandments of God, and would not keep them; these are they that have no part in the first resurrection. ([Mosiah 15:22-26](#).)

THE TESTIMONY OF MATTHEW

This is in perfect harmony with the testimony of Matthew:

And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

And came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. ([Matthew 27:52-53](#).)

We are informed by the Savior, when he visited the Nephites, that it was the Saints only who were raised from the dead, following his resurrection. ([3 Nephi 23:9-10](#).)

We know definitely that David, king of Israel, did not come forth from the grave in this first resurrection because of the sins which he committed. Peter in his discourse on the day of Pentecost gave us that information as follows:

Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. ([Acts 2:29](#).)

This is confirmed by the Prophet Joseph Smith when in a discourse he said:

Even David must wait for those times of refreshing, before he can come forth and his sins be blotted out. For Peter, speaking of him, says: "David hath not yet ascended into heaven, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day." His remains were then in the tomb. Now, we read that many bodies of the saints arose at Christ's resurrection, probably all the saints, but it seems that David did not. Why? Because he had been a murderer. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 188.)

The Prophet also declared that Moroni came to him a resurrected personage, (*Ibid.*, p. 119; see also [D. & C. 133:55](#).) so also John the Baptist, Peter, and James were resurrected beings when they came and bestowed upon the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery the Aaronic Priesthood and the Melchizedek Priesthood.

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The Resurrection Universal

Question: *"If sons of perdition are to become members of the devil's kingdom, will they be permitted to have tangible bodies, or will they be like Satan, denied the right to bodies? In other words, will sons of perdition be resurrected and receive immortal bodies, or will their bodies be destroyed?"*

Answer: The scriptures are very clear on this question. Paul, for instance, wrote to the members of the Church at Corinth, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." ([1 Corinthians 15:22](#).) The Savior told the Jews that the hour would come when he would visit the dead and they should hear his voice, "And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." ([John 5:29](#).) In a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith the Lord said: "But, behold, verily I say unto you, before the earth shall pass away, Michael, mine archangel, shall sound his trumpet, and then shall all the dead awake, for their graves shall be opened, and they shall come forth— yea, even all." ([D. & C. 29:26](#).)

Our Redeemer came into the world to obtain the mastery over death. If one soul born into this world, no matter how wicked he may be, were denied the resurrection, then Jesus Christ would not have the victory. It is imperative, therefore, that *all* must receive the resurrection, and Amulek declared this emphatically to the people of Ammonihah, ([Alma 11:40-45](#).) as did Alma to his son Corianton. (*Ibid.*, 40:22-26.)

The second part of the question is, will they receive their bodies in the resurrection and then afterwards have them destroyed? Alma has answered this in his discourse at Ammonihah:

And now behold, I say unto you then cometh a death, even a second death, which is a spiritual death; then is a time that whosoever dieth in his sins, as to a temporal death, shall also die a spiritual death; yea, he shall die as to things pertaining unto righteousness.

Then is the time when their torments shall be as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever; and then is the time that they shall be chained down to an everlasting destruction, according to the power and captivity of Satan, he having subjected them according to his will.

Then, I say unto you, they shall be as though there had been no redemption made; for they cannot be redeemed according to God's justice; and they cannot die, seeing there is no more corruption. (*Ibid.*, 12:16-18.)

LATTER-DAY PROPHETS PROCLAIMED A UNIVERSAL RESURRECTION

President John Taylor in a discourse December 31, 1876, said:

What, will every body be resurrected? Yes, every living being; "but every man in his order, Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end." That is, the Saints shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years. One of the apostles says, But the rest of the dead live not again until the thousand years are expired. Now all must come forth from the grave, some time or other, in the self-same tabernacles that they possessed while living on the earth. It will be just as Ezekiel has described it—bone will come to its bone, and flesh and sinew will cover the skeleton, and at the Lord's bidding breath will enter the body, and we shall appear, many of us, a marvel to ourselves. (*Deseret News*, December 31, 1876.)

President Joseph F. Smith in a discourse delivered January 20, 1895, said this:

Then all of the bodies that lie in the grave are called forth; not all at the first resurrection, nor in the morning of the first resurrection, but some perhaps in the last resurrection; and every soul will be required to go before the bar of God and be judged according to the deeds done in the body. If his works have been good, then he receives the reward of well doing. If evil, then he will be banished from the presence of the Lord. Nevertheless, he is an immortal being, because he possesses his resurrected body. Every creature that is born in the image of God will be resurrected from the dead, just as sure as he dies, you can write that down if you please, and never forget it, never allow yourself to have any unbelief on that account: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."([1 Corinthians 15:22](#).)

It matters not whether we have done well or ill, whether we have been intelligent or ignorant, or whether we have been bondsmen or slaves or freemen, all men will be raised from the dead; and, as I understand it, when they are raised from the dead they become immortal beings, and they will no more suffer the dissolution of the spirit and the body.(*Improvement Era*, Vol. 19, p. 386.)

In a discourse at the conference held April 7, 1844, the Prophet Joseph Smith made the following remarks on the resurrection:

There have been remarks made concerning all men being redeemed from hell; but I say that those who sin against the Holy Ghost cannot be forgiven in this world or in the world to come: they shall die the second death. Those who commit the unpardonable sin are doomed to Gnomon, to dwell in hell, worlds without end. As they concoct scenes of bloodshed in this world, so they shall rise to the resurrection which is as the lake of fire and brimstone. Some shall rise to the everlasting burning of God; for God dwells in everlasting burnings; and some shall rise to the damnation of their own filthiness, which is as exquisite a torment as the lake of fire and brimstone.(*D.H.C.*, Vol. 6, p. 317.)

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11

The Perfect Resurrection

Question: *"What will the state of mankind be at resurrection? This question was raised when discussing the resurrection of the Savior. He appeared to his disciples with the wounds in his hands, feet, and side. When we come forth in the resurrection, will the earthly scars we get and the deformities remain? If we lose a part of the body, like a hand, arm, or leg, will we be made whole?"*

Answer: A little sound thinking will reveal to us that it would be inconsistent for our bodies to be raised with all kinds of imperfections. Some men have been burned at the stake for the sake of truth. Some have been beheaded, and others have had their bodies torn asunder; for example, John the Baptist was beheaded and received his resurrection at the time of the resurrection of our Redeemer. It is impossible for us to think of his coming forth from the dead holding his head in his hands; our reason says he was physically complete in the resurrection. He appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery with a perfect resurrected body. When we come forth from the dead, our spirits and bodies will be reunited inseparably, never again to be divided, and they will then be assigned to the kingdom to which they belong. All deformities and imperfections will be removed, and the body will conform to the likeness of the spirit, for the Lord revealed that "that which is spiritual" is in "the likeness of that which is temporal; and that which is temporal in the likeness of that which is spiritual; the spirit of man in the

likeness of his person, as also the spirit of the beast, and every other creature which God has created." ([D. & C. 77:2.](#))

AMULEK TAUGHT THE PERFECT RESURRECTION

The Prophet Amulek has stated the case very clearly in these words:

Now, there is a death which is called a temporal death; and the death of Christ shall loose the bands of this temporal death. . . .

The spirit and the body shall be reunited again in its perfect form; both limb and joint shall be restored to its proper frame, even as we now are at this time; and we shall be brought to stand before God, knowing even as we know now, and have a bright recollection of all our guilt.

Now, the restoration shall come to all, both old and young, both bond and free . . . both the wicked and the righteous; and even there shall not so much as a hair of their heads be lost; but every thing shall be restored to its perfect frame, as it is now, or in the body, and shall be brought and be arraigned before the bar of Christ the Son, and God the Father, and the Holy Spirit, which is one Eternal God, to be judged according to their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil.

Now, behold, I have spoken unto you concerning the death of the mortal body, and also concerning the resurrection of the mortal body. I say unto you that this mortal body is raised to an immortal body, that is from death, even from the first death unto life, that they can die no more; their spirits uniting with their bodies, never to be divided; thus the whole becoming spiritual and immortal, that they can no more see corruption. ([Alma 11:42-45.](#))

Alma testifies to this same thing speaking of the resurrection of our Lord which will give him power to call forth all of the dead. He says:

Yea, this bringeth about the restoration of those things of which has been spoken by the mouths of the prophets.

The soul shall be restored to the body, and the body to the soul; yea, and every limb and joint shall be restored to its body; yea, even a hair of the head shall not be lost; but all things shall be restored to their proper and perfect frame. (*Ibid.*, 40:22-23.)

THE PRINTS OF THE NAILS

We must not judge the resurrection of others by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is true that he appeared to his disciples and invited them to examine the prints of the nails in his hands, his side, and in his feet, but this was a special manifestation to them. We should know that the disciples had failed to understand that he was to rise again, and this manifestation was for their benefit. Thomas was absent, and it was with some difficulty that the other disciples could convince him that the Lord had risen. Thomas was not worse than any other one of the apostles. Perhaps they would have done just what he did had they been absent. The Lord said to them and later to him,

Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. ([Luke 24:39](#); see also [John 20:27.](#))

When the Savior comes to the Jews in the hour of their distress as recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 45, verses 51 to 53, he will show them the wounds in his hands and in his feet.

And then shall the Jews look upon me and say: What are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet?

Then shall they know that I am the Lord; for I will say unto them: These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. I am he who was lifted up. I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God.

And then shall they weep because of their iniquities; then shall they lament because they persecuted their king.

The Prophet Zechariah has also prophesied of the Savior's second coming and his appearance to the Jews when they will flee from their enemies and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in twain making a valley in which they shall seek refuge. At that particular time he will appear and they shall say: "What are these wounds in thine hands? Then shall he answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." ([Zechariah 13:6](#).) Then they will mourn, each family apart, because they had rejected their Lord.

It is true that he also showed these wounds to the Nephites when he visited with them with the same purpose in view, to convince them of his identity, and give to them a witness of his suffering. It can hardly be accepted as a fact that these wounds have remained in his hands, side, and feet all through the centuries from the time of his crucifixion and will remain until his second coming, but they will appear to the Jews as a witness against their fathers and their stubbornness in following the teachings of their fathers. After their weeping and mourning they shall be cleansed.

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12

The Prophet's Vision of Salvation for the Dead

Question: *"I have a question concerning the vision of the celestial kingdom given to Joseph Smith as recorded in volume two of the D.H.C., page 380, which is as follows:*

" 'All who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall live heirs of the celestial kingdom of God; also all that shall die henceforth without a knowledge of it, who would have received it with all their hearts, shall be heirs of that kingdom, for I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts.'

"Knowing that baptism is essential for entering the kingdom of heaven, I assume that it is understood that those who die without a knowledge of the gospel will have to receive baptism, vicariously, before they can inherit the kingdom; but will not those who died in ignorance have to have the gospel taught to them and receive their reward according to how wholeheartedly they accept Christ and his teachings, or will they be rewarded in accordance to the things they would have done on earth, had they had the chance to do them? It seems that the latter is implied in the revelation."

Answer: This revelation is one of the earliest foreshadowing the salvation for the dead. It was given in the Kirtland Temple, under the following circumstances: The First Presidency and a few others met in the Kirtland Temple to attend to some ordinances when the heavens were opened to them and the

Prophet beheld the celestial kingdom and saw his father, mother, and his brother Alvin, who had died before the restoration of the gospel, in that kingdom. He marveled over this, since Alvin had died before the priesthood was restored and the Church was organized and, therefore, had not been baptized. Then came the voice declaring the words previously quoted. This was January 21, 1836.

Later, in October 1840, the Prophet wrote an epistle to the Twelve who were in Great Britain, in which he preached to them baptism for the dead. In this epistle he said:

I first mentioned this doctrine in public when preaching the funeral sermon of Brother Seymour Brunson; and have since then given general instructions in the Church on the subject. The Saints have the privilege of being baptized for those of their relatives who are dead, whom they believe would have embraced the gospel, if they had been privileged with hearing it, and who have received the gospel in the spirit, through the instrumentality of those who have been commissioned to preach to them while in prison.

Without enlarging the subject, you will undoubtedly see its consistency and reasonableness; and it presents the gospel of Christ in probably a more enlarged scale than some have imagined it. (*D.H.C.*, Vol. 4, p. 231.)

REVELATIONS ON BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD

From that time on, the subject of baptism and salvation for the dead was a favored theme by the Prophet in which he declared that only through baptism could either the living or the dead obtain salvation in the celestial kingdom. In September 1842 he wrote by revelation the two important letters on salvation for the dead and the need for a recorder making a complete record of every ordinance thus performed. These appear as sections 127 and 128, in the Doctrine and Covenants.

The Savior said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus did not understand this; so the Lord repeated: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." ([John 3:3](#), [5](#).)

Baptism, therefore both by the water and by confirmation, under the hands of one who holds divine authority to officiate in these ordinances, is a requirement made of every person old enough to be accountable before the Lord. The vision given to the Prophet in the Kirtland Temple in 1836, was one portraying what would be, not that had taken place, for his father and mother were still living. Because Alvin had accepted and approved the mission given to his younger brother Joseph but was cut off before there was an opportunity for him to be baptized, the Lord indicated that he was, through the vicarious ordinances of the gospel when performed for him, entitled to all the blessings of the exaltation which he would have received had he lived to obtain them in person.

In his justice our Eternal Father grants to all those who *would have received the gospel* had that privilege come to them, the same blessings which are received by the faithful who are living. This is done by vicarious work in the temples of the Lord.

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Question: *"Was temple work done in the days of the old prophets? Did they have the sealing powers or was all of this work left for the Church in this dispensation? If they had it, was it done in temples?"*

Answer: The detailed history of the performance of the saving ordinances of the gospel as practiced in ancient times was never recorded in any detail, because such ordinances are sacred and not for the world. There are, however, in the Old Testament references to covenants and obligations under which the members of the Church in those days were placed, although the meaning is generally obscure. For example, in [Exodus 40:12-15](#), [Numbers 25:11-13](#), and [Jeremiah 31:31-33](#), we have reference to sacred covenants.

The fact that Adam and Noah, long after they were dead, appeared to Daniel as Michael and Gabriel([Daniel 10:13](#), [21](#); [8:16](#).) and to Zacharias and Mary([Luke 1:11-19](#); [1:26-31](#).) is evidence that they had received the fulness of blessings that entitled them to stand in the presence of God. Likewise the appearance of Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration with our Redeemer and his apostles, Peter, James, and John, is evidence that they also had obtained the fulness of the blessings of exaltation. Moreover, the fact that Elijah was the last of the ancient prophets to hold the keys of the sealing power before the coming of our Savior in his ministry, is evidence that this power was exercised in the interest of Israel in ancient times. Because of the fact that Elijah held this sealing authority, the Lord inspired Malachi to prophesy of Elijah's coming in the last days to restore these keys of authority in the following words:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.([Malachi 4:5-6](#).)

We know that this prophecy was fulfilled, for on the third day of April, 1836, Elijah came to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple and conferred upon them this sealing authority. Since that day the hearts of the children have turned to their fathers, and without doubt the hearts of the fathers have turned to their children, and this influence is felt throughout the world causing the children to search the records of their dead. This fact is so definitely apparent that it cannot be denied. Today we have the privilege of going into our temples and there sealing children to parents and parents to each other that we all may, as Paul declared, bow our knees " . . . unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

"Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, . . ."([Ephesians 3:14-15](#).)

MOSES COMMANDED TO BUILD A TABERNACLE

That ordinances for Israel might be performed, the Lord commanded Moses to build a portable tabernacle —at times called the temple—in the wilderness in which sacred ordinances could be performed. The purpose of this building, in which Samuel officiated, has been declared in our day in these words:

For, for this cause I commanded Moses that he should build a tabernacle, that they should bear it with them in the wilderness, and to build a house in the land of promise, that those ordinances might be revealed which had been hid from before the world was.([D. & C. 124:38](#))

There is a sufficient reason why the ordinance of baptism is not more clearly revealed in the Old Testament, and it is that in the repeated copying of the ancient records and their repeated translations, scribes and translators took from the record the plain and precious parts because they were contrary to their beliefs or comprehension. The Book of Mormon([2 Nephi 9:23-24](#); [31:4-21](#); [Mosiah 18:12-17](#), [21](#); [25:17-18](#); [Alma 6:2](#); [7:14](#); [19:35](#); [3 Nephi 1:23](#); [11:22-41](#); [12:2](#); [19:10-13](#); [30:2](#); [Moroni 8:8-16](#).) makes

this clear; and in the writings of Moses, ([Moses 6:51-68](#); [7:10-11](#); [8:23-24](#).) as they are given to us, we have them restored; and we know that baptism was taught to Adam, (*Ibid.*, 6:51-68.) and he taught it to his children. There are some references in the Old Testament ([Psalm 51:2](#), [7](#); [Isaiah 1:16](#); [48:1](#).) to washings, which could well mean baptisms, and the evidence of the font in the temple of Solomon ([1 Kings 7:23-26](#); [2 Chronicles 4:2-6](#).) is a mute witness that baptisms must have been practiced in it; these are spoken of as washings. The Book of Mormon makes the fact very clear that baptism was practiced among the Jews, and in the writings of Moses which have been restored, we learn that baptism was taught to Adam, and he was commanded to teach it to his children.

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14

The Salvation of Little Children

Question: *"In our class we were discussing the statement made by the Prophet Joseph Smith: 'And I also beheld that all children who die before they arrive at the years of accountability, are saved in the celestial kingdom of heaven.'* (*D.H.C. 2:381.*)

"Some of those present thought it did not seem logical that all children no matter what their race or creed would be saved in the celestial kingdom, while their parents would not be able to obtain celestial glory. They cited the case of a Negro baby for an example. We will appreciate any light on this subject."

Answer: It is hardly proper for members in the class to entertain doubts in relation to a revelation from the Lord, but in perfect order for them to ask for an explanation, when they fail to understand.

There is neither inconsistency in this revelation nor an injustice to the parents who refuse to repent and receive the gospel. The Lord has revealed that "Every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning; and God having redeemed man from the fall, men became again, in their infant state, innocent before God." ([D. & C. 93:38](#).)

Again he has said:

But behold, I say unto you, that little children are redeemed from the foundation of the world through mine Only Begotten; Wherefore, they cannot sin, for power is not given unto Satan to tempt little children, until they begin to become accountable before me. (*Ibid.*, 29:46-47.)

The Savior also took little children and blessed them saying to his disciples:

Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. ([Matthew 19:14](#).)

Since all mankind come into the world innocent so far as this mortal life is concerned, and there is no sin laid to their charge, should they die in their childhood before they are accountable for their deeds, it would be manifestly unjust to condemn them, whether they are white, brown, or black.

Nephi wrote:

. . . and he doeth nothing, save it be plain unto the children of men; and he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile.([2 Nephi 26:33.](#))

INNOCENT CHILDREN NOT AT FAULT

It is not the fault of innocent children who die that their parents do not come into the Church and refuse to accept the gospel. Through the mercy and justice of our Eternal Father, every soul is entitled to hear the gospel. If they do not have the privilege in this mortal life, then they will have it in the spirit world, where it is preached to the dead and even the dead will be judged according to their works.

Baptism is the door into the celestial kingdom. All who forsake their sins and are baptized and remain true will enter the celestial kingdom. Therefore parents are offered the gospel, if not in this life, then in the spirit world, and if they reject it, the sin is on their own heads.

For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape; and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated.

And the rebellious shall be pierced with much sorrow; for their iniquities shall be spoken upon the housetops, and their secret acts shall be revealed.([D. & C. 1:2-3.](#))

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Little Children in the Celestial Kingdom

Question: "When an infant dies, will it be exalted into the celestial kingdom? Some members of the class expressed the thought that because children die before reaching the age of accountability they will be exalted into the celestial kingdom the same as those who live and endure to the end upon the earth. Others feel that those infants who die before eight years of age will still have to be tried and tempted at some time after the resurrection just as adults are here and that they will have to earn their place in the celestial kingdom after enduring such trials. Will you give us some help on the question?"

Answer: From the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith until now, articles have been published repeatedly answering the question in relation to the salvation and exaltation of little children. It would be well if we could get some questions settled once and for all time so that they will not have to be repeated. It would be well if members of the Church would do more studying of the fundamental principles of the gospel as the Lord has commanded us to do.

Little children who die before the age of accountability are saved in the celestial kingdom. The Prophet Joseph Smith received this knowledge by vision in the Kirtland Temple, January 21, 1836. On that occasion it was shown that ". . . all children who die before they arrive at the years of accountability are saved in the celestial kingdom of heaven." (*D.H.C.*, Vol. 2, p. 381.) Serious thinking would tell us that if these children are saved, they are not subject to a later trial by the temptation and buffeting of Satan. The Savior taught his disciples when in their presence this doctrine as plainly as words can tell. ([Matthew 18:6-10](#); [19:13-15](#); [Mark 10:13-16.](#)) Revelations given in our day also show that little children

who are deprived of the experiences in mortal life are, by eternal decree, redeemed from the temptation of Satan. ([D. & C. 29:46-48](#); [Mosiah 15:24-25](#); [Moroni 8:10-24](#).) Such revelations are perfectly clear and should be beyond dispute.

OUR ETERNAL FATHER IS JUST

Our Eternal Father is just, as well as merciful. It would be an injustice to little children who die in early life to deprive them of the opportunity to obtain all the blessings that are promised to adults who are faithful and true in this life. A doctrine which would deprive little children of such blessings borders on the corrupt teaching which has persisted almost since the passing of the ancient apostles and which is one of the outstanding notions which points so clearly to the apostasy in primitive days. It will be interesting to have a glimpse at this abominable practice and doctrine which has brought misery to the souls of thousands of parents who have lost their little ones.

The Catholic Encyclopedia states: "The absolute necessity of this sacrament [baptism] is often insisted on by the Fathers of the Church, especially when they speak of infant baptism." It quotes St. Irenaeus as saying: "Christ came to save all who are reborn through Him to God, infants, children, and youths" (*infantes et parvulos et pueros*). This reference attributes these words to St. Augustine: "If you wish to be a Catholic, do not believe, nor say, nor teach, that infants who die before baptism can obtain the remission of original sin." And again: "Whoever says that even infants are vivified in Christ when they depart this life without the participation of His sacrament (Baptism), both opposes the Apostolic preaching and condemns the whole Church, which hastened to baptize infants, because it unhesitatingly believes that otherwise they can not possibly be vivified in Christ." (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, p. 265, Article on Baptism.)

St. Ambrose is quoted as having said that "No one is excepted, not the infant, not the one hindered by any necessity." In the Pelagian controversy are found similarly strong pronouncements by the Councils of Carthage and Milevis, and of Pope Innocent I. The explanation is made that because of the church's belief in the necessity of baptism as a means to salvation, as was already noted by St. Augustine, the Church committed the power of baptism in certain contingencies even to laymen and women.

Catholic theologians are unanimous in declaring that "infants dying without baptism are excluded from the beatific vision," but concerning the state of such souls in the next world they do not agree. While it is certain that unbaptized infants must endure the pain of loss, (*Paena Domni*), it is not at all certain that they are subject to the pain of sense (*Paena Sensus*). St. Augustine taught that unbaptized infants would not be exempt from the pain of sense, but at the same time it would be of the mildest form. St. Gregory Nazianzen expresses the belief that such infants would suffer only the pain of loss. . . .

Since the twelfth century, the opinion of the majority of theologians has been that unbaptized infants are immune from all pain of sense. (*Ibid.*, p. 267.)

THE INTRODUCTION OF HERETICAL DOCTRINES

So we see that it was not long after the departure of the apostles that the most damnable heresies crept into the theological teachings and practices and destroyed the church. How grateful Latter-day Saints should be that the truth has been restored. The spirit of every child born into this world was mature in the pre-existence. We lived in the presence of our Eternal Father. We were taught his laws and obeyed them. We had knowledge and understanding far beyond anything we gain in this life. Naturally that which we gained by obedience in the pre-existence will in the next world be restored to us. The main purpose of mortal life, we may be sure, is to obtain tabernacles of flesh and bones, and then to be tried and proved through our deeds in the body. If an infant dies, it has obtained its body. The body does not grow in the grave, but the spirit returns to await the resurrection. Following the resurrection the infant

will grow to the full stature of its spirit. The spirit and body become inseparably connected, and every privilege to obtain the exaltation given to mortals will be given to those who die in infancy. Justice demands that this be done. I recommend to readers the teachings of President Joseph F. Smith as found in *Gospel Doctrine*. From those teachings the following paragraphs are taken.

But, with little children who are taken away in infancy and innocence before they have reached the years of accountability, and are not capable of committing sin, the gospel reveals to us the fact that they are redeemed, and Satan has no power over them. Neither has death any power over them. They are redeemed by the blood of Christ, and they are saved just as surely as death has come into the world through the fall of our first parents. It is further written that Satan has no power over men or women, except that power which he gains over them in this world. In other words, none of the children of the Father who are redeemed through obedience, faith, repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins, and who live in that redeemed condition, and die in that condition are subject to Satan. Therefore, he has no power over them. They are absolutely beyond his reach just as little children are who die without sin. To my mind this is a consolation and a glorious truth that my soul delights in. I am grateful to my Heavenly Father that he has revealed it unto me, for it affords a consolation that nothing else can give, and it brings a joy to my spirit that nothing can take away, except the consciousness on my part of having sinned and transgressed against light and knowledge which I may have possessed.

Under these circumstances, our beloved friends who are now deprived of their little ones have great cause for joy and rejoicing, even in the midst of the deep sorrow that they feel at the loss of their little one for a time. They know he is all right; they have the assurance that their little one has passed away without sin. Such children are in the bosom of the Father. They will inherit their glory and their exaltation, and they will not be deprived of the blessings that belong to them; for, in the economy of heaven, and in the wisdom of the Father, who doeth all things well, those who are cut down as little children are without any responsibility for their taking off, they, themselves, not having the intelligence and wisdom to take care of themselves and to understand the laws of life; and, in the wisdom and mercy and economy of God our Heavenly Father, all that could have been obtained and enjoyed by them if they had been permitted to live in the flesh will be provided for them hereafter. They will lose nothing by being taken away from us in this way. . . .

SPIRITS ARE FULL-GROWN BEFORE MORTAL BIRTH

The spirits of our children are immortal before they come to us, and their spirits, after bodily death, are like they were before they came. They are as they would appear if they had lived in the flesh, to grow to maturity, or to develop their physical bodies to the full stature of their spirits. If you see one of your children that has passed away it may appear to you in the form in which you would recognize it, the form of childhood; but if it came to you as a messenger bearing some important truth, it would perhaps come as the spirit of Bishop Edward Hunter's son (who died when a little child) came to him, in the stature of full-grown manhood, and revealed himself to his father, and said: "I am your son."

Bishop Hunter did not understand it. He went to my father and said: "Hyrum, what does that mean? I buried my son when he was only a little boy, but he has come to me as a full grown man, a noble, glorious, young man, and declared himself my son. What does it mean?"

Father (Hyrum Smith, the Patriarch) told him that the Spirit of Jesus Christ was full-grown before he was born into the world; and so your children were full-grown and possessed their full stature in the spirit, before they entered mortality, the same stature that they will possess after they have passed away from mortality, and as they will also appear after the resurrection, when they shall have completed their mission.

Joseph Smith taught the doctrine that the infant child that was laid away in death would come up in the resurrection as a child; and, pointing to the mother of a lifeless child, he said to her, "You will have the joy, the pleasure, and satisfaction of nurturing this child, after its resurrection, until it reaches the full stature of its spirit." There is restitution, there is growth, there is development, after the resurrection from death. I love this truth. It speaks volumes of happiness, of joy and gratitude to my soul. Thank the Lord he has revealed these principles to us. (*Gospel Doctrine*, pp. 452-56.)

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16

Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost

Question: "*We have had different interpretations of two statements in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 132, verse 27.*"

"First: What is meant by blasphemy against the Holy Ghost?"

Answer: In order to obtain the correct understanding we will quote the verse as it appears in the Doctrine and Covenants.

The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which shall not be forgiven in the world nor out of the world, is in that ye commit murder wherein ye shed innocent blood, and assent unto my death, after ye have received my new and everlasting covenant, saith the Lord God; and he that abideth not this law can in nowise enter into my glory, but shall be damned, saith the Lord.

In Matthew we find a similar statement as follows:

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. (Matthew 12:31-32.)

In the Doctrine and Covenants we have this further information:

Thus saith the Lord concerning all those who know my power, and have been made partakers thereof, and suffered themselves through the power of the devil to be overcome, and to deny the truth and defy my power—

They are they who are the sons of perdition, of whom I say that it had been better for them never to have been born;

For they are vessels of wrath, doomed to suffer the wrath of God, with the devil and his angels in eternity;

Concerning whom I have said there is no forgiveness in this world nor in the world to come—

Having denied the Holy Spirit after having received it, and having denied the Only Begotten Son of the Father, having crucified him unto themselves and put him to an open shame.([D. & C. 76:31-35.](#))

These who are to be so severely punished must first have the testimony of the gospel and by the power of the Holy Ghost know that Jesus is the Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God. Afterwards if they sin and openly and wilfully turn against the truth and deny Christ, they assent unto his death, and this is equivalent to crucifying him again and the shedding of innocent blood, and they put him to open shame.

In Hebrews this is written:

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

And have tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame.([Hebrews 6:4-6.](#))

BLASPHEMY AGAINST JESUS CHRIST

A man who has not received the gift of the Holy Ghost and therefore who has never "tasted of the heavenly gift," may be guilty of blasphemy against Jesus Christ and be forgiven on his repentance, but so great is the testimony through the gift of the Holy Ghost, should he turn against the Lord and fight his work, there is no forgiveness. The shedding of innocent blood is not confined to taking lives of the innocent, but is also included in seeking to destroy the word of God, and putting Christ to open shame. Those who have known the truth and then fight against the authorized servants of Jesus Christ also fight against him, for they who fight against his servants also do it unto him, and thus are guilty of his blood.

Wherefore, he saves all except them—they shall go away into everlasting punishment, which is endless punishment, which is eternal punishment, to reign with the devil and his angels in eternity, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, which is their torment—

And the end thereof, neither the place thereof, nor their torment, no man knows;

Neither was it revealed, neither is, neither will be revealed unto man, except them who are made partakers thereof.([D. & C. 76:44-46.](#))

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17

The New and Everlasting Covenant

Question: "*Second: What is meant by the new and everlasting covenant? Does it mean temple marriage and sealing?*"

The new and everlasting covenant is the fulness of the gospel.([D. & C. 66:2.](#)) It is composed of "All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations" that are sealed upon members of the Church by the Holy Spirit of promise, or the Holy

Ghost, by the authority of the President of the Church who holds the keys.(*Ibid.*, 132:7.) The President of the Church holds the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood. He delegates authority to others and authorizes them to perform the sacred ordinances of the priesthood.

Marriage for eternity is *a* new and everlasting covenant. Baptism is also *a* new and everlasting covenant,(*Ibid.*, 132:22.) and likewise ordination to the priesthood, and every other covenant is everlasting and a part of *the* new and everlasting covenant which embraces all things.

In the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 132, the Lord speaks of two covenants that are everlasting and a great many have confused the two. The first everlasting covenant is revealed in verses four and five as follows:

For behold, I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory.

For all who will have a blessing at my hands shall abide the law which was appointed for that blessing, and the conditions thereof, as were instituted from before the foundation of the world.

This covenant pertains to the covenant of marriage which was to be revealed. Then the Lord speaks of *the* new and everlasting covenant which is obedience, faith, in God, repentance from sin and baptism for the remission of sins and the keeping of every commandment belonging to the plan of salvation, for the Lord has said:

And I now give unto you a commandment to beware concerning yourselves, to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life.

For you shall live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.(*Ibid.*, 84:43-44.)

At the time of the organization of the Church there were some who wished to unite with it by virtue of the fact that they had once been baptized by immersion, but with a sectarian baptism. The Lord announced:

Behold, I say unto you that all old covenants have I caused to be done away in this thing; and this is a new and everlasting covenant, even that which was from the beginning.

Wherefore, although a man should be baptized an hundred times it availeth him nothing, for you cannot enter in at the strait gate by the law of Moses, neither by your dead works.(*Ibid.*, 22:1-2.)

So here the Lord speaks of baptism as *a* "new and everlasting covenant." However, in Section 132, verses 6 and 7, the Lord speaks of *the* new and everlasting covenant and in detail explains what it is. He is now speaking of a definite covenant, which embraces "All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations," pertaining to salvation and exaltation in the celestial kingdom.

Here we discover that marriage for eternity is not *the* new and everlasting covenant, but an everlasting covenant embraced in the new and everlasting covenant which covers all things.

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The Sin against the Holy Ghost

Question: *"Will you kindly explain the significance of verses 26 and 27 in the Doctrine and Covenant, Section 132? Some hold to the view that after a man and a woman are married for time and all eternity, nothing can prevent them from receiving the promised blessings of exaltation except blasphemy against the Holy Ghost or the shedding of innocent blood. Others feel that such a doctrine tends to nullify the repeated statement in the scriptures that every man will be judged and rewarded according to his works."*

Answer: Your question in relation to what is written in these verses is one that is constantly recurring. It is a great regret that so many well-meaning men are deceived into thinking that after they are married in the temple for time and all eternity they become immune from the consequences of all sin except the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost or the shedding of innocent blood. According to what is written there is but one unpardonable sin, that is the sin against the Holy Ghost and the shedding of innocent blood. All other sins *may* be forgiven, but only on conditions of sincere and permanent repentance. Shedding innocent blood is spoken of in the scriptures as consenting to the death of Jesus Christ and putting him to open shame. For those who have had the witness of the Holy Ghost, fighting with wicked hate against his authorized servants is the same, for if this is done to them, it is also against him. For men who have had the light of the Holy Ghost to turn away and fight the truth with murderous hate, and those who are authorized to proclaim it, there is no forgiveness in this world, neither in the world to come.

In the twelfth chapter of Matthew, verses 31-32, the Lord states in substance what is said in the two verses in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 132, referred to above. The Prophet Joseph Smith's revision of these verses is as follows:

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men *who receive me and repent*; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven unto men. (Italics author's.)

And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him; neither in this world; neither in the world to come. (Inspired Version, [Matthew 12:26-27](#).)

INFLUENCE OF HOLY GHOST IS SPIRIT SPEAKING TO SPIRIT

The reason blasphemy against the Son of God may be forgiven, even if the Son be made manifest in a vision or a dream, is that such manifestation does not impress the soul as deeply as does the testimony of the Holy Ghost. The influence of the Holy Ghost is Spirit speaking to spirit, and the indelible impression is one that brings conversion and conviction to the soul as no other influence can. The Holy Spirit reveals the truth with a positiveness wherein there is no doubt and therefore is far more impressive than a vision given to the eye.

In the Book of Hebrews it is written:

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son

of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. ([Hebrews 6:4-6.](#))

Peter has also borne witness to this truth:

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. (Inspired Version, [2 Peter 2:20-21.](#))

We have heard of some who have stated that a man cannot be an apostle of Jesus Christ unless he has seen the Lord. The fact is that the testimony of the Spirit is far more impressive and lasting than a vision given to the eye. This the Lord knew when he said that the blasphemy against him may be forgiven but not the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

John, in his writing to the members of the Church in the first century of the Christian era instructed them in matters of this kind:

If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. (*Ibid.*, [1 John 5:16-17.](#))

THE SIN UNTO DEATH

The sin unto death is the unpardonable sin which will bring to those who partake of it banishment with the devil and his angels and is called the second death. From these words of John we gather that any sin, except a sin unto death, may be forgiven on true repentance. This is in harmony with what is written in the vision in the Doctrine and Covenants in regard to sons of perdition:

Thus saith the Lord concerning all those who know my power, and have been made partakers thereof, and suffered themselves through the power of the devil to be overcome, and to deny the truth and defy my power—

They are they who are the sons of perdition, of whom I say that it had been better for them never to have been born;

For they are vessels of wrath, doomed to suffer the wrath of God, with the devil and his angels in eternity;

Concerning whom I have said there is no forgiveness in this world nor in the world to come—

Having denied the Holy Spirit after having received it, and having denied the Only Begotten Son of the Father, having crucified him unto themselves and put him to an open shame.

These are they who shall go away into the lake of fire and brimstone, with the devil and his angels—

And the only ones on whom the second death shall have any power. ([D. & C. 76:31-36.](#))

From this it appears that all the rest of mankind, no matter what their sins have been, eventually will be heirs of redemption from the devil and his angels. We must not, however, lose sight of the fact that all men are to be judged according to their works. To be redeemed from Satan and his angels does not

mean that all will find their way into the celestial kingdom. Although redeemed from his power, they will have to go to that kingdom which they merit according to their works. The remaining verses of this section inform us of this fact. Some, after being redeemed, will go to the telestial kingdom. They will suffer the wrath of God(*Ibid.*, 76:98-107.) which will continue through the Millennium and to the end of the earth when they receive their resurrection. Paul said that the last enemy to be destroyed is death.([1 Corinthians 15:24-26](#).) Those entitled to the terrestrial resurrection will come forth after the coming of Jesus Christ.([D. & C. 88:99](#).) Redemption does not mean, therefore, that they are to receive eternal life in the celestial kingdom.

IT IS POSSIBLE TO SIN BEYOND REPENTANCE

Repentance is a gift of God. It is possible for men to sin beyond the power of repentance. This was the condition of the Nephites in the days of Mormon. Of them it is written, they were beyond the power of redemption and they sinned knowingly.([Helaman 13:38](#), [Mormon 2:13-14](#), [5:16](#).) We read that the devils believe and tremble, but they do not repent.

Now we will consider the significance of these two verses. Regarding the punishment of the unrepentant, Moroni has written:

Then will ye longer deny the Christ, or can ye behold the Lamb of God? Do ye suppose that ye shall dwell with him under a consciousness of your guilt? Do ye suppose that ye could be happy to dwell with that holy Being, when your souls are racked with a consciousness of guilt that ye have ever abused his laws?

Behold, I say unto you that ye would be more miserable to dwell with a holy and just God, under a consciousness of your filthiness before him, than ye would to dwell with the damned souls in hell. ([Mormon 9:3-4](#).)

When the Lord left his Nephite disciples he said to them:

And he that endureth not unto the end, the same is he that is also hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence they can no more return, because of the justice of the Father.

And this is the word which he hath given unto the children of men. And for this cause he fulfilleth the words which he hath given, and he lieth not, but fulfilleth all his words.

And no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins. ([3 Nephi 27:17-19](#))

The Lord does not contradict himself. Therefore we must reach the conclusion that no blessing ever promised is granted to men without the requirement of faithfulness; or, in case of transgression, a sincere and humble repentance. While in the two verses under consideration there is no mention of repentance, it is deeply implied and must be considered so in the light of these other scriptures. How foolish it is for anyone to think that the Lord has given him a blessing that is not based on faithfulness and will be received whether repented of or not.

PROMISES BASED UPON FAITHFULNESS

Therefore we can say most positively that all those who are married in the temple for time and all eternity receive their blessings and enter their covenants with these promises based upon their faithfulness. If it so happens that they do sin and break their covenants, but have not sinned unto death,

they will have to repent completely and faithfully of all their sins or they will never enter the celestial glory. No *unrepentant person who remains in his sins will ever enter into the glories of the celestial kingdom*.

Let us see if we can discover the real intent of these two verses. As stated, the blessings are based on faithfulness. Suppose a man violates his covenants by committing a heinous sin and afterwards humbly and prayerfully forsakes it and seeks forgiveness with all his heart; the sin not being one unto death, what will be required of him? The revelation states that nevertheless he will be "destroyed in the flesh, and shall be delivered unto the buffetings of Satan until the day of redemption, saith the Lord." Now, where is there a man who wishes to pay such a price? Should a man who had not made such covenants commit the same sort of offense and then he should repent and receive the truth with all his heart, it is not written of him that he would have to pass through such an awful ordeal. With him his repentance may suffice without the suffering and torment following his repentance. David committed a dreadful crime, and all his life afterwards sought for forgiveness. Some of the Psalms portray the anguish of his soul; yet David is still paying for his sin. He did not receive the resurrection at the time of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Peter declared that his body was still in the tomb, and the Prophet Joseph Smith has said, "David sought repentance at the hand of God carefully with tears, for the murder of Uriah; but he could only get it through hell: he got a promise that his soul should not be left in hell." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 229.) Again we ask: Who wishes to spend a term in hell with the devil before being cleansed from sin? (For additional discussion on the subject of paying the price for sin, see *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, pp. 133-138.)

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19

The Second Death

Question: *"In teaching a theology class a question arose on which we would like to receive the answer if possible. I want to teach only that which is true. The question is on the fourteenth chapter of Helaman and centered particularly in the 17th and 18th verses where Samuel says:*

"But behold, the resurrection of Christ redeemeth mankind, yea, even all mankind, and bringeth them back into the presence of the Lord.

"Yea, and it bringeth to pass the condition of repentance, that whosoever repenteth the same is not hewn down and cast into the fire; but whosoever repenteth not is hewn down and cast into the fire; and there cometh upon them again a spiritual death, yea, a second death, for they are cut off again as to things pertaining to righteousness."

"Now on first reading, this conveys the idea that Samuel is referring to sons of perdition, and, following the cross reference to [Alma 19:16](#), we get the same impression that the second death is an everlasting death as to things pertaining unto righteousness. Also in [Jacob 3:11](#), 'O my brethren, hearken unto my word; arouse the faculties of your soul; shake yourselves that ye may awake from the slumber of death; and loose yourselves from the pains of hell that ye may not become angels to the devil, to be cast into that lake of fire and brimstone which is the second death.'

"A member of the class explained that this second death, or spiritual death, meant anyone who did not

attain the celestial kingdom; in other words, anyone who did not receive the presence once again of God the Father. Now with this idea all who go to the telestial and terrestrial as well as well as sons of perdition, suffer the second death. Or were these people spoken of by Alma, Jacob, and Samuel so wicked and of such a murderous nature that they were about to fall under the same curse as the devil and his angels?"

Answer: It is very clear in the [Doctrine and Covenants 76:30-37](#), that the only persons who will be completely overcome by this dreadful fate are the sons of perdition, who go with the devil and his angels into "outer darkness." All the rest of mankind, even the wicked, will receive some measure of salvation after they suffer the wrath of God. However, they will of necessity be brought to repentance and acceptance of the gospel of Jesus Christ as far as it will apply to them. They will not be given the ordinances which do not pertain in their kingdoms. From the reading of other passages we discover that there will be great multitudes embracing the vast majority of mankind, who will never be privileged to come back to dwell in the presence of the Father and the Son. These receive banishment from their presence, but not entirely do they get beyond the divine benediction.

The Lord said in the Sermon on the Mount:

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. ([Matthew 7:13-14](#).)

The Lord has given us a definition of spiritual death([D. & C. 29:41-44](#).) which was pronounced upon Adam and Eve after their transgression. This second spiritual death is partaken of by every soul who has not repented of his sins and obtained a remission by baptism in water, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. Of these the Lord said:

And thus did I, the Lord God, appoint unto man the days of his probation—that by his natural death he might be raised in immortality unto eternal life, even as many as would believe;

And they that believe not unto eternal damnation; for they cannot be *redeemed from their* spiritual fall, because they repent not;(*Ibid.*, vs. 43-44; italics added.)

ALL MUST EVENTUALLY CONFESS OR BE BANISHED

The time will come when "every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall *confess to God*," that Jesus is the Christ, ([Romans 14:11](#); italics added.) and all who are worthy of a place in any of the kingdoms of glory will have to learn to be obedient to the divine laws by which they will be governed. All who refuse will have to go with the devil and his angels into perdition. This group will be composed of those who have known the light and have had a testimony of the truth and who have sinned against the light beyond the power of repentance.

Having denied the Holy Spirit after having received it, and having denied the Only Begotten Son of the Father, having crucified him unto themselves and put him to an open shame.

These are they who shall go away into the lake of fire and brimstone, with the devil and his angels—

And the only ones on whom the second death shall have any power;

Yea, verily, the only ones who shall not be redeemed in the due time of the Lord, after the suffering of

his wrath.([D. & C. 76:35-38.](#))

Who glorifies the Father, and saves all the works of his hands, except those sons of perdition who deny the Son after the Father has revealed him.

Wherefore, he saves all except them—they shall go away into everlasting punishment, which is endless punishment, which is eternal punishment, to reign with the devil and his angels in eternity, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, which is their torment—

And the end thereof, neither the place thereof, nor their torment, no man knows;

Neither was it revealed, neither is, neither will be revealed unto man, except to them who are made partakers thereof.(*Ibid.*, vs. 43-46.)

Evidently many among us have made a dreadful mistake, but not unpardonable, in thinking that the sons of perdition will be very few. We have heard it said at times that they will be so few that they probably could be "counted on the fingers of one hand." Where this thought originated we may not know. From the reading of the scriptures it appears that there will be a large number; far too many even if there were but one, for their punishment is most severe without any question.

All those who are permanently subject to the second death are those who have had the testimony of the Holy Ghost and who have known the truth and then have rejected it and put Christ to open shame. Of these we read:

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing *they crucify to themselves* the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.([Hebrews 6:4-6](#); italics added.)

FATE OF NEPHITES WHO WERE ONCE BELIEVERS IN CHRIST

In relation to the Nephites spoken of by Jacob, Alma, Samuel, and others, we should remember that these were once members of the Church who had turned away and denied the truth and fought to destroy it. They were not like the people in the gentile nations who never received the truth. These Nephites had received the light, rebelled, and then attempted to destroy it. After the visitation of our Lord, both Nephites and Lamanites lived in unity in the light of the gospel for nearly two hundred years. The Lord established his Church in all its fulness among them, and when they began to rebel they did it knowingly. This is clearly indicated in the words of Mormon. They had the guidance of the Nephite twelve, and three of them remained until in the extreme wickedness of the people the Lord would not permit them to remain. Samuel's castigation of these Nephites was fully justified in his accusation and prophecy of their punishment.

Behold, we are surrounded by demons, yea, we are encircled about by the angels of him who hath sought to destroy our souls. Behold, our iniquities are great. O Lord, canst thou not turn away thine anger from us? And this shall be your language in those days.

But behold, your days of probation are past, ye have procrastinated the day of your salvation until it is everlastingly too late, and your destruction is made sure; yea, for ye have sought all the days of your lives for that which ye could not obtain; and ye have sought for happiness in doing iniquity, which thing

is contrary to the nature of that righteousness which is in our great and Eternal Head. ([Helaman 13:37-38.](#))

And again the words of Mormon:

And it came to pass that when I, Mormon, saw their lamentation and their mourning and their sorrow before the Lord, my heart did begin to rejoice within me, knowing the mercies and the long-suffering of the Lord, therefore supposing that he would be merciful unto them that they would again become a righteous people.

But behold this my joy was vain, for their sorrowing was not unto repentance, because of the goodness of God; but it was rather the sorrowing of the damned, because the Lord would not always suffer them to take happiness in sin. ([Mormon 2:12-13.](#))

INHABITANTS OF THE TELESTIAL AND TERRESTRIAL GLORIES

Those who never receive the Holy Ghost who enter the telestial and terrestrial kingdoms are not entirely shut out from the influence of God our Father. We are informed that the inhabitants of the telestial kingdom, which will be a kingdom with some measure of glory, will be ministered to by those of the terrestrial kingdom. They will suffer the wrath of God on earth and after death until they have paid the price of their sinning and have learned to be obedient to law. The record says of them:

These are they who received not the gospel of Christ, neither the testimony of Jesus.

These are they who are thrust down to hell.

These are they who shall not be redeemed from the devil until the last resurrection, until the Lord, even Christ the Lamb, shall have finished his work.

These are they who receive not of his fulness in the eternal world, but of the Holy Spirit through the ministration of the terrestrial;

These are they who are liars, and sorcerers, and adulterers, and whoremongers, and whosoever loves and makes a lie.

These are they who suffer the wrath of God on earth.

These are they who suffer the vengeance of eternal fire.

These are they who are cast down to hell and suffer the wrath of Almighty God, until the fulness of times, when Christ shall have subdued all enemies under his feet, and shall have perfected his work. ([D. & C. 76:82, 84-86, 103-6.](#))

Those who were honorable men who will be permitted to go to the terrestrial kingdom will be blessed with ministrations from the celestial kingdom. They will be privileged with visitations from Jesus Christ but will be denied the presence of the Father. Thus we learn that our Eternal Father will do all that he can for the inhabitants of the earth according to their works. The inhabitants of the telestial and terrestrial kingdoms will be given a measure of salvation, but not the fulness. They will be redeemed from the power of Satan after they have paid the penalty of their transgressions and have learned to be obedient to divine law.

But behold, and lo, we saw the glory and the inhabitants of the telestial world, that they were as

innumerable as the stars in the firmament of heaven, or as the sand upon the seashore;

And heard the voice of the Lord saying: These all shall bow the knee, and every tongue shall confess to him who sits upon the throne forever and ever;

For they shall be judged according to their works, and every man shall receive according to his own works, his own dominion, in the mansions which are prepared;

And they shall be servants of the Most High; but where God and Christ dwell they cannot come, worlds without end.(Ibid., 76:109-12.)

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The Iniquity of the Fathers

Question: *"We are studying the Ten Commandments. Will you give me an explanation of the last half of the second commandment, [Exodus 20:5](#)? It has seemed to me that the second Article of Faith is a direct contradiction of this commandment."*

Answer: The scripture in question is as follows: ". . . visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me."

The second Article of Faith reads: "We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression."

Adam's transgression was banishment from the presence of God and bringing the physical death into the world. The majority in the religious world maintain that every child born into this world is tainted with "original sin," or partakes of Adam's transgression in his birth. The second Article of Faith contradicts this foolish and erroneous doctrine. This has nothing to do whatever with the latter part of the second commandment.

What your question means, as I interpret it, is this: You have an idea that the commandment means that when a man sins his children will be held responsible for his folly and be punished for it, for three or four generations. The commandment does not mean anything of this kind. The Lord never punishes a child for its parents' transgressions. He is just and merciful. The real meaning of this visiting of the iniquity is that when a man transgresses he teaches his children to transgress, and they follow his teachings. It is natural for children to follow in the practices of their fathers and by doing so suffer for the parents' iniquity which they have voluntarily brought upon themselves.

NUMEROUS PASSAGES SHOW MERCY AND JUSTICE

There are numerous other passages of scripture showing the mercy and justice of the Lord and that they are not to be punished for the fathers' transgression. Here are a few:

The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.([Deuteronomy 24:16](#).)

But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.([2 Kings 14:6](#). Compare [2 Chronicles 25:4](#).)

In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge.

But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.([Jeremiah 31:29-30](#).)

The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.([Ezekiel 18:20](#).)

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The Sacrament and Forgiveness of Sin

Question: *"Will you please answer this question: Does the partaking of the sacrament forgive one of his sins?"*

Answer: The forgiveness of sins comes through faith and sincere repentance. If a member of the Church has committed sin, the correct procedure is repentance and a sincere desire to right the wrong. If we have wronged a brother or a sister, we should go to the injured person and confess our sin and should make amends. If it is a sin against the Church, we should confess it before the Church and seek forgiveness. It is written:

And if he or she do any manner of iniquity, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law, even that [the law] of God.

And if thy brother or sister offend thee, thou shalt take him or her between him or her and thee alone; and if he or she confess thou shalt be reconciled.

And if he or she confess not thou shalt deliver him or her up unto the church, not to the members, but to the elders. And it shall be done in a meeting, and that not before the world.

And if thy brother or sister offend many, he or she shall be chastened before many.

And if any one offend openly, he or she shall be rebuked openly, that he or she may be ashamed. And if he or she confess not, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law of God.

If any shall offend in secret, he or she shall be rebuked in secret, that he or she may have an opportunity to confess in secret to him or her whom he or she has offended, and to God that the Church may not speak reproachfully of him or her.([D. & C. 42:87-92](#).)

The Lord has also instructed us as follows:

Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things.

Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness, even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day;

For verily this day is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High;

Nevertheless thy vows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days and at all times;

But remember that on this, the Lord's day, thou shalt offer thine oblations and thy sacraments unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord. (*Ibid.*, 59:7-12.)

THE SACRAMENT IS A MOST SACRED ORDINANCE

Partaking of the sacrament is one of the most sacred ordinances given to the Church. It is given in order that we may be brought in closer communion with the spirit of the Lord and thus renew three most sacred covenants. They are: first, that we will take upon us the name of Jesus Christ; second, that we will always remember him; third, that we will always keep his commandments which he has given us. We are promised if we will do this that we will be blessed with the constant companionship of his spirit. If we have violated any one of these covenants, then there should be sincere repentance through which we receive forgiveness of the Church before we partake of the sacrament.

The Lord said to the Prophet Joseph Smith in August 1830, when he went to purchase wine for the sacrament:

For, behold, I say unto you, that it mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament, if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my glory—remembering unto the Father my body which was laid down for you, and my blood which was shed for the remission of your sins. (*Ibid.*, 27:2.)

Again in March 1841, the Lord said:

Ye are also commanded not to cast any one who belongeth to the church out of your sacrament meetings; nevertheless, if any have trespassed, let him not partake until he makes reconciliation .

And again I say unto you, ye shall not cast any out of your sacrament meetings who are earnestly seeking the kingdom—I speak this concerning those who are not of the church. (*Ibid.*, 46:4-5.)

When the Savior visited the Nephites, he taught them as follows:

And now behold, this is the commandment which I give unto you, that ye shall not suffer any one knowingly to partake of my flesh and blood unworthily, when ye shall minister it;

For whoso eateth and drinketh my flesh and blood unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to his soul; therefore if ye know that a man is unworthy to eat and drink of my flesh and blood ye shall forbid him.

Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out from among you, but ye shall minister unto him and shall pray for him unto the Father, in my name; and if it so be that he repenteth and is baptized in my name, then

shall ye receive him, and shall minister unto him of my flesh and blood.

But if he repent not he shall not be numbered among my people, that he may not destroy my people, for behold I know my sheep, and they are numbered.([3 Nephi 18:28-31](#).)

PARTAKING OF THE SACRAMENT UNWORTHILY

Paul had to take the members of the Church in Corinth to task for their sins in partaking of the sacrament unworthily. It appears that when they assembled they turned the sacrament service into a feast where they ate and became drunken. So Paul said to them:

What? have ye not houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was destroyed, took bread:

And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.([1 Corinthians 11:22-30](#).)

And who are guilty of sin shall truly repent and make restitution before partaking of the sacrament.

While of these emblems we partake
In Jesus' name and for his sake,
Let us remember and be sure
Our hearts and hands are clean and pure.

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22

Prayer and Fasting

Question: *"How old is the law of prayer and fasting? We know that prayer and fasting were practiced in*

the days of our Savior. Was it also a law in ancient Israel? When was it introduced as a commandment in this dispensation, and when and why was the day changed from Thursday to the first Sunday of each month? We have discussed these questions, and there is a difference of opinion."

Answer: Fasting we may well assume is a religious custom that has come down from the beginning of time, and always associated with prayer. There are numerous customs and practices that were given anciently about which the knowledge became so common that their origin has been lost in antiquity; therefore we cannot give time or place where the first commandment on fasting was given. It was common in the most ancient times, and there are numerous incidents recorded in the Old Testament indicating that it was well established not only among the true worshipers of Deity but also among the heathen nations. All of this indicates the antiquity of fasting, which we may presume was revealed to Adam.

We may obtain the understanding from the writings of Isaiah that fasting and prayer were commanded by the Lord. For their perversion of this doctrine, Isaiah rebukes Israel and endeavors to bring them back to the path of faithful obedience. His words and commandment are as follows:

Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your feast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.

Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?([Isaiah 58:1-7](#).)

A CONTRITE SPIRIT AND A HUMBLER HEART

Here Isaiah points out clearly the intent of the fast. It was observed with a contrite spirit, a humbled heart, before the Lord. Evil was to be forsaken, prayer and supplication offered with a covenant to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and let the oppressed go free. If they would do this, then, said the Lord, "shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward." (*Ibid.*, 58:8. Isaiah points out clearly the real intent of the fast. It is to be observed in the spirit of humility and worship. The poor were to be remembered and fed; the naked were to be clothed; and the burdens of the oppressed were to be relieved. Who dare say that the welfare plan was not a commandment to ancient Israel? Yet the people had made mockery of it.) Israel, however, had perverted the fast and thus merited Isaiah's and the

Lord's rebuke.

All through the Old Testament we find evidence of the observance of fasting and prayer. Two of the best examples are worthy of mention here. The first is the story in the book of Esther. This story should be familiar to everyone. Briefly, Haman, the enemy of the Jews, forced the king to make a decree that all the Jews within the kingdom should be destroyed. The law was one that could not be revoked. Esther, the queen, sent a petition to all the Jews saying:

Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish. ([Esther 4:16](#).)

Her petition before the king bore fruit, and while the king could not change the decree, he countered it by permitting the Jews to arm and defend themselves. Another striking example of fasting is recorded in the Book of Daniel. When the tricksters plotted against Daniel and had him cast into the den of lions according to the unchangeable law and when the king wished to deliver him, the plotters said: "Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establishes may be changed." ([Daniel 6:15](#).) Then the king went to the palace and passed the night in fasting: "neither were instruments of musick brought before him: and his sleep went from him." (*Ibid.*, 6:18.) Daniel also sought the Lord in fasting and prayer when seeking the favor of the Lord. (*Ibid.*, 10:1-3.)

NEW TESTAMENT REFERENCES TO FASTING AND PRAYER

In the New Testament also there are numerous references to fasting and prayer, when blessings were expedient from the Lord. In this case it is sufficient to refer to the commandment of our Savior, taught in the great Sermon on the Mount, and to the healing of the youth possessed by an evil spirit. On the mount the Savior said:

Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

But thou, when thou fastest anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. ([Matthew 6:16-18](#).)

The other incident is the casting out of the devil from the youth whom the disciples could not heal. The disciples asked the Lord why they had failed. He informed them that it was because of their lack of faith, for if they had faith even the moving of mountains would be possible to them; then he added: "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." (*Ibid.*, 17:21.)

Fasting and prayer in the present dispensation have been carried over from primitive times. From the organization of the Church the principle of fasting in the spirit of prayer has been a commandment of the Lord. ([D. & C. 59:8-13](#); [88:76](#), [119](#).) In regard to the choosing of a set day of the month, we have this testimony coming from President Brigham Young in a discourse in the old tabernacle, Salt Lake City, December 8, 1867:

. . . You know that the first Thursday in each month we hold as a fast day. How many here know the origin of this day? Before tithing was paid, the poor were supported by donations. They came to Joseph [Smith the Prophet] and wanted help, in Kirtland, and he said there should be a fast day, which was decided upon. It was to be held once a month, as it is now, and all that would have been eaten that day, of flour, or meat, or butter, or fruit, or anything else, was to be carried to the fast meeting and put in the

hands of a person selected for the purpose of taking care of the poor. If we were to do this now faithfully, do you think the poor would lack for flour, or butter, or cheese, or meat, or sugar, or anything they needed to eat? No! there would be more than could be used by all the poor among us. It is economy in us to take this course, and do better by our poor brethren and sisters than they have hitherto been done by. Let this be published in our newspapers. Let it be sent forth to the people, that on the first Thursday of each month, the fast day, all that would be eaten by husbands and wives and children and servants should be put in the hands of the bishop for the sustenance of the poor. I am willing to do my share as well as the rest, and if there are no poor in my ward, I am willing to divide with those wards where there are poor. If the sisters will look out for rooms for those sisters who need to be taken care of, and see them provided for, you will find that we will possess more comfort and more peace in our hearts and our spirits will be buoyant and light, full of joy and peace. The bishops should, through their teachers, see that every family in their wards, who is able, should donate what they would naturally consume on the fast day to the poor. (*J. of D.*, Vol. 12, p. 115.)

This custom of holding fast meetings on Thursday was continued in Nauvoo and also after the coming of the members of the Church to the Rocky Mountains. I can remember the time when certain business houses closed their doors each fast day and placed on the doors, "Closed for fast meeting." It seems that the people were more faithful in those days in attendance and willingness to remain to the finish of a two-hour meeting or even longer.

FAST DAY FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH

The change from the first Thursday to the first Sunday of the month came about in this manner. Hyrum M. Smith, who later became a member of the Council of the Twelve, was a missionary in Newcastle, England, in the year 1896. On the Thursday of the fast meeting, members of the Church in that land had to get excused from their employment with a loss of pay. Some of them were workers in the coal mines. When these came from the pits, they had to go home, bathe, and change their clothes. This was a loss both of time and compensation. Hyrum wrote to his father, President Joseph F. Smith, and asked why, under such circumstances, the fast day had to be a Thursday and not a Sunday. President Smith took the letter to the meeting of the First Presidency and the apostles and presented it there. The following is an excerpt from the minutes of the meeting held November 5, 1896:

President Joseph F. Smith introduced the subject of fast meetings, suggesting that a change of the time from the first Thursday to the first Sunday in each month would probably be beneficial. This was endorsed by President George Q. Cannon, and after other brethren had spoken on the subject, it was decided that the Tabernacle services be dispensed with on the first Sunday of each month, and that the saints in this city as well as in the country wards, should have the privilege of meeting in their meeting houses at 2 o'clock P.M., to observe fast day.

Perhaps unfortunately, the time of fast meetings was gradually changed to an earlier hour in most of the stakes and wards of the Church, which probably has resulted in a loss of spirituality and of observance of the fast.

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Question: *"Last Sunday my husband and I were called on to speak at the evening services in our ward. We were followed by another speaker who gave a forceful address in which he warned us of false doctrine that he said is being taught in the Church. In part of his address he said many throughout the Church are teaching false doctrine in relation to the saying of Jesus to Peter, 'And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' He said that the Catholics say this rock is Peter, and many in the Church teach that it is the rock of revelation. The rock, he said, is Christ. Is it a false doctrine to say that this rock is revelation? We have been taught always to believe it."*

Answer: The expression "the rock" is used in the scriptures with different meanings that must be interpreted according to the context. There are times when it refers to Christ and times when it refers to the gospel and other times when the reference is to revelation and again to the Church. Let us consider the passage under question. At Caesarea Philippi the Lord asked his disciples,

Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. ([Matthew 16:13-19](#).)

THE CHURCH IS NOT ESTABLISHED ON ANY MAN

The interpretation placed on this conversation by the Catholics is extremely absurd. It is contrary to reason to think that the Lord would establish his Church upon any man, no matter how faithful and wonderful he might be. It is the Church of Jesus Christ, not the church of Peter. When the Nephite disciples sought the Lord to know what was to be the name of the Church, he said to them:

Have they not read the scriptures, which say ye must take upon you the name of Christ, which is my name? For by this name shall ye be called at the last day;

And whoso taketh upon him my name, and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day.

Therefore, whatsoever ye shall do, ye shall do it in my name; therefore ye shall call the church in my name; and ye shall call upon the Father in my name that he will bless the church for my sake.

And how be it my church save it be called in my name? For if a church be called in Moses' name then it be Moses' church; or if it be called in the name of a man then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel. ([3 Nephi 27:5-8](#).)

The extent of the authority to Peter was to hold the keys of the kingdom of heaven, meaning the presiding authority upon the earth. These keys enabled him to take charge and preside over the work of the Lord, exercising divine authority. The antecedent of this is "revealed" in the preceding paragraph, and upon revelation the Lord would build his church. It has always been so understood in the past, and it is today. If there is no communication with the heavens, if the Lord cannot speak, then he has no authorized servants upon the earth. When the gift of revelation ceased then errors crept in with disastrous results. This is the complaint made in ancient Israel at times; because of wickedness, there was no prophet, no vision, no communication with the heavens. ([1 Samuel 28:6](#).) For nearly, if not quite, nineteen hundred years there had been no divine revelation. Religious denominations relied entirely on the dead letter of the Bible for their authority. They closed the heavens against themselves, and their interpretations of scripture without divine guidance led them into division, subdivision, and multiplication of churches, each going its own way blindly and in confusion. The power of the priesthood was lost and the true Church of Jesus Christ ceased to exist on the earth. There had been no prophet, no revelation, or divine instruction from the time of the apostles of old until the Lord again opened the heavens and sent holy messengers to restore that which had been taken away.

EXPLANATION BY THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH

Speaking on the meaning of the Savior's words to Peter concerning the rock, the Prophet Joseph Smith has said:

John was a priest after the order of Aaron, and he held keys of the priesthood, and came forth preaching repentance and baptism, for the remission of sins, but at the same time cries out, "There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose," and Christ came according to the words of John, and he was greater than John, because he held the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood and kingdom of God, and had before revealed the priesthood to Moses; yet Christ was baptized by John to fulfill all righteousness; and Jesus in his teaching says: "Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." What rock? Revelation. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 273-74.)

Members of the Church should not spend their time in argument over this passage; nor should there arise misunderstandings. In the Doctrine and Covenants we find passages in which the term "rock" refers definitely to revelation, also to the Church and to Jesus Christ. In the Book of Mormon and the Bible like passages are found. Here are a few examples:

Therefore, fear not, little flock; do good; let earth and hell combine against you, for if ye are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail. ([D. & C. 6:34](#). See *Ibid.*, 10:69; 33:13; and [3 Nephi 11:39](#).)

It appears clear that this passage refers to revelation. In the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 50:44, the rock refers to Christ, "the stone of Israel." In the Book of Mormon are several passages that clearly refer to Jesus and others that refer to revelation and the gospel; for instance, consider these:

And in them [Nephite records] shall be written my gospel, saith the Lamb, and my rock [revelation] and my salvation. ([1 Nephi 13:36](#).)

And then at that day will they not rejoice and give praise unto their everlasting God, their rock and their salvation? Yea, at that day, will they not receive the strength and nourishment from the true vine? Yea, will they not come unto the true fold of God? (*Ibid.*, 15:15.)

Rejoice, O my heart, and cry unto the Lord, and say: O Lord, I will praise thee forever; yea, my soul will rejoice in thee, my God, and the rock of my salvation. ([2 Nephi 4:30](#). Compare [Helaman 5:12](#).)

From these passages we see that the "rock" is used variously: in reference to the gospel, revelation, and Jesus Christ. When we get this clearly in our minds and have the spirit of discernment so we can understand the passages in which this term is used, there should be no conflict as to the correct meaning by members of the Church.

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What Can We Do on the Sabbath?

Question: "What can we do on the Sabbath? The opinion of the class as to keeping the Sabbath day holy seems to be quite negative. To the teen-agers, reading or visiting all day constitutes nothing but boredom. We often hear that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath, so it is not hard to see where the idea that what is rest for the individual is keeping the Sabbath day holy. In other words, one who does manual labor all week deserves physical rest on Sunday; one who works in mental labor should be able to get out and stretch his bones on Sunday. Is this true? Is it wrong to take rides on Sunday? What of the watching of TV on Sunday? What are some of the things we can do on Sunday?"

Answer: The observance of the Sabbath day is one of the great commandments of the Decalogue. It is well to repeat it here as it was given to ancient Israel; also as it has been given to modern Israel in our dispensation.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. ([Exodus 20:8-11](#).)

This commandment is quite definite and in this dispensation the Lord gave further instruction as follows:

Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things.

Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness, even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day;

For verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High;

Nevertheless thy vows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days and at all times;

But remember that on this, the Lord's day, thou shalt offer thine oblations and thy sacraments unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord.

And on this day thou shalt do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart that thy fasting may be perfect, or, in other words, that thy joy may be full.

Verily, this is fasting and prayer, or in other words, rejoicing and prayer. ([D. & C. 59:7-14.](#))

BLESSINGS AWAIT THOSE WHO OBEY COUNSEL

There is much more said in relation to this subject, but this will suffice for our purpose. Here the Lord speaks emphatically, but kindly. There must be great blessings awaiting those who have faith and integrity enough to obey this counsel. The faithful members of the Church who keep the first great commandment—to love God—never find any commandment from him unfruitful or difficult to keep. The Lord has never given a commandment to the members of the Church, or to the world, except it has been given for the everlasting welfare and blessing for all who obey it. Every commandment given has to do with spiritual things. The Lord declared that never at any time has he given unto man a law which is temporal in its nature. Although we fail to see it, every commandment has a spiritual application. This is definitely so in relation to the observance of the Sabbath day.

It is very natural for children to ask why they should obey the law of the Sabbath as the Lord has proclaimed it. They are indeed worthy of an answer. This I shall endeavor to supply.

If we had sufficient faith and humility, we would be willing to follow the commandments of the Lord, not only in relation to the Sabbath, but also every other commandment he has given. Even the young children should have this faith impressed upon them, and by skilful teaching in the home it will be developed. The Lord has given us six days of each week in which we can work and earn our living and in these days most of us, and especially children, can and do find time for some amusement and relaxation. The demands upon the time of working men and likewise professional men, seldom, if ever, require all of the time during these six days without any hours for relaxation and amusement. School children have one day free out of the six, and each school day leaves some period for relaxation. The athletics, playing of games, and other amusements that they engage in indicate that the entire time of the six days is seldom occupied without some hours free. Most businessmen and professional men can find time for golf or fishing and hunting; and they do not need the Sunday to "stretch their bones," in sports and other entertainment. Some working men today work only five days a week, yet they have formed the habit of taking the Sabbath for additional time for leisure and amusement. There are very few exceptions where no free time can be found. Most of us, if we would consider carefully the time that we have free, will discover that there are free moments when we could improve our minds by study and the reading of good books.

SIX DAYS AMPLE FOR TEMPORAL NEEDS

These six days give ample time for men to care for the temporal needs of their bodies, to clothe and feed themselves and their dependents, and the Lord has asked us to take the seventh, or Sabbath, to feed the spirit. The great majority of men and children today are not content to take only the six days for the purposes of the physical needs of the body and are starving their spirits. If we go without food, we get hungry; if we go without sleep, we get weary and ill; but we seldom think that the starving of the spirit is anything that should worry us. When we do this, we feel no pain, no misery, unless it is that our conscience troubles us. If we persist in the violation of the Sabbath day, the time comes when our conscience becomes seared, and we fail to heed its warnings or its call for spiritual food. Surely it is not unreasonable for us to be commanded to obey the Sabbath when the Lord has given us six-sevenths of our time for all temporal purposes.

Children need to feed the spirit as well as adults do, and surely the man or the woman who obeys the will of the Lord feels better and has more claim upon the blessings of the Lord than does the rebellious brother or sister. It has been demonstrated many times by those who have forsaken the seventh day for business and have given it to the service of the Lord as he has required, that they have prospered. They testify that they have been more abundantly blessed in their temporal affairs as well as in spiritual needs. Did not the Lord say through Malachi that he would bless us abundantly if we would keep his commandments?([Malachi 3:16-19](#).) Surely his promises do not fail.

It is true the Sabbath day was not given to man just as a whim and to please the Lord, or to take away from man the opportunity to do what he is wont to do on the six days of the week. He did it because it is for man's good. The spirit calls for it. One day out of seven is essential for the spiritual feeding of both spirit and body. Learning the things of the kingdom of God is essential to our eternal existence. Thus we are guided in our progress towards perfection in the kingdom of God. Surely, for our own eternal good, we should be willing to devote one-seventh of our time in religious study and reflection, and as the Lord has pointed out, lay aside our daily occupations and obtain rest from such labors and pay our devotion to the Most High in the house of prayer in the spirit of fasting that our joy may be full.

GIVE DILIGENT HEED TO WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE

As things are today, none of us gives too much time to the development of our spiritual natures. The Latter-day Saints are not burdened with knowledge concerning the fundamental principles of the gospel. It behooves us, one and all, to give more diligent heed to these things. As early as September 1832, the Lord said to the Church:

And I now give unto you a commandment to beware concerning yourselves, to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life.

For you shall live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.

For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light is Spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ.([D. & C. 84:43-45](#).)

It is true that small children wonder why they are not to play, go to picture shows, and engage in other amusement on the Sabbath day. Here is a duty devolving on the parents who can furnish the amusement and at the same time enlighten themselves as well as their children by the right kind of instruction. This instruction can be found in stories taken from the scriptures, the history of the Church, biographies of the brethren who performed wonderful work in the early days of the Church. Thus the Sabbath day can be made attractive during the hours between Sunday School and the sacrament meeting in the evening. In this way pitfalls of the picture shows and the other unwholesome amusements will be avoided. You ask if it is wrong to take rides on the Sabbath, to view television and listen to the radio. Certainly it is not in harmony with the day to view shows on crime and scenes of murder, banditry, and other things contrary to the spirit of the gospel; and it must be admitted that these dominate the picture shows. So far as my practice is concerned, the radio and television are not turned on in the home on the Sabbath day, except it be to listen to religious sermons or other programs sponsored by the Church. We never go automobile riding on the Sabbath except in the line of religious duty and appointment.

ISRAEL PUNISHED FOR BREAKING THE SABBATH

One of the charges the Lord brought against Israel which brought upon them their punishment and dispersion from the land of Israel, was in large measure the fact that the law of the Sabbath had been broken. Ezekiel by the voice of the Lord said to them at the time of the Jewish captivity —

I am the Lord your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them;

And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.

Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me: they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted my sabbaths: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness.

Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand, and wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen, in whose sight I brought them forth.

I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries;

Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols.([Ezekiel 20:19-24](#).)

PRUDENCE AND MODERATION

President Joseph F. Smith once wrote to two of his daughters who were in the east attending college in answer to a letter from them in which they asked him a similar question to the one asked here. In the letter he said after quoting [Exodus 20:8-11](#):

All things should be done with prudence and in moderation. This is the command. It is binding upon us. There are sound religious reasons for it and physiological reasons not less sound. Indeed it is a physical as well as a divine law. Those who heed it will reap the reward of obedience to divine law, and enjoy the benefits of the physical law. It is not less needful to the human being than sleep—although not so speedily felt. No one can live without sleep, neither can one survive long without rest. The result of sleep is no more potential to prolongation of life than the Sabbath rest, although we may survive longer without the latter than the former, speaking from a physical point of view. From a spiritual point of view the wilful violation of the law of Sabbath rest is as deadly to moral growth and faith, as is the sleepless eye to the mortal being. But the great point is, God has said it! and not for his own but for man's well being; he therefore should obey. If he does not he will have to abide the consequences both temporal and spiritual to himself.

To those who love human pleasures and pursue them, the duties of life, the essential parts of life, are irksome, dry, pleasureless, seemingly valueless. But their pleasure will fade away, and their joy will perish and leave them but the ashes of their treasure, with hopeless regrets.

Honor the Sabbath day and keep it holy; and you will know more about it.(*Conference Report*, October 1938, pp. 38-39.)

SABBATH DAY REQUIREMENTS LISTED

On another occasion President Joseph F. Smith said:

To observe the Sabbath day properly is the plain duty of every Latter-day Saint—and that includes the young men and the young women and the boys and girls. It may seem strange that it should be necessary to repeat this often asserted fact; but there appear to be some people, and sometimes whole communities, who neglect this duty, and therefore stand in need of his admonition.

What are we required to do on the Sabbath day? The revelations of the Lord to the Prophet Joseph Smith are very plain on this subject, and these should govern us, for they are in strict harmony with the teachings of the Savior. Here are some of the simple requirements:

The Sabbath is appointed unto you to rest from your labors.

The Sabbath is a special day for you to worship, to pray, and to show zeal and ardor in your religious faith and duty—to pay devotions to the Most High.

The Sabbath day is a day when you are required to offer your time and attention in worship of the Lord, whether in meeting, in the home, or wherever you may be—that is the thought that should occupy your mind. . . .

The Lord is not pleased with people who know these things and do them not. . . .

Men are not showing zeal and ardor in their religious faith and duty when they hustle off early Sunday morning in, cars in teams, in automobiles, to the canyons, the resorts, and to visit friends or places of amusement with their wives and children. They are not paying their devotions in this way to the Most High. (*Ibid.*, October 1935, p. 15.)

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Churches on Earth during the Millennium

Question: *"Will there be any other churches with ministers on the earth during the Millennium teaching doctrine contrary to the doctrines of the Church which the Lord established? I understand that in the resurrection people of all creeds and manners of belief will be resurrected, but I am not clear in relation to the millennial reign?"*

Answer: When the reign of Jesus Christ comes during the Millennium, only those who have lived the telestial law will be removed. It is recorded in the Bible and other standard works of the Church that the earth will be cleansed of all its corruption and wickedness. Those who have lived virtuous lives, who have been honest in their dealings with their fellow man and have endeavored to do good to the best of their understanding, shall remain. To Malachi it was revealed that ". . . all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." ([Malachi 4:1](#)) Isaiah also declared that because the people had broken the everlasting covenant and defiled the earth, ". . . therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." ([Isaiah 24:6](#).) In this dispensation the Lord revealed the following:

And prepare for the revelation which is to come, when the veil of the covering of my temple, in my tabernacle, which hideth the earth, shall be taken off, and all flesh shall see me together.

And every corruptible thing, both of man, or of the beasts of the field, or of the fowls of the heavens, or of the fish of the sea, that dwells upon all the face of the earth, shall be consumed;

And also that of element shall melt with fervent heat; and all things shall become new, that my

knowledge and glory may dwell upon all the earth.([D. & C. 101:23-25](#).)

ALL CORRUPTIBLE THINGS SHALL BE CONSUMED

So we learn that all corruptible things, whether men or beasts or element, shall be consumed; but all that does not come under this awful edict shall remain. Therefore, the honest and upright of all nations, kindreds, and beliefs who have kept the terrestrial as well as the celestial law, will remain. Under these conditions people will enter the great reign of Jesus Christ, carrying with them their beliefs and religious doctrines. Their agency will not be taken from them. On this subject President Brigham Young has said:

In the Millennium men will have the privilege of their own belief, but they will not have the privilege of treating the name and character of Deity as they have done before. No, but every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God the Father that Jesus is the Christ.(*Discourses of Brigham Young*, pp. 182, 1925 ed.: p. 119, 1943 ed.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith has said:

There will be wicked men on the earth during the thousand years. The heathen nations who will not come up to worship will be visited with the judgments of God, and must eventually be destroyed from the earth(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 268.)

The saying that there will be wicked men on the earth during the Millennium has been misunderstood by many, because the Lord declared that the wicked shall not stand, but shall be consumed.([D. & C. 5:18-19](#); [29:8-10](#); [101:23-25](#).) In using this term "wicked" it should be interpreted in the language of the Lord as recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 84, verses 49-53. Here the Lord speaks of those who have not received the gospel as being "wicked" as they are still under the bondage of sin, having not been baptized. "The inhabitants of the terrestrial order will remain on the earth during the Millennium, and this class is without the gospel ordinances."(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 269.)

The Lord said through Isaiah, speaking of the Millennium:

For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.([Isaiah 65:17-20](#). Compare [D. & C. 101:28-31](#).)

GOSPEL TO BE TAUGHT WITH GREAT POWER

The gospel will be taught far more intensely and with greater power during the Millennium until all the inhabitants of the earth shall embrace it. Satan shall be bound so that he cannot tempt any man. Should any man refuse to repent and accept the gospel under those conditions then he would be accursed. Through the revelations given to the prophets we learn that during the reign of Jesus Christ for a thousand years, eventually all people will embrace the truth. Isaiah prophesied of the Millennium as

follows:

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. (*Ibid.*, 11:6-9.)

This chapter in Isaiah Moroni quoted to the Prophet Joseph Smith and said to him it was about to be fulfilled. If the knowledge of the Lord covers the earth as the waters do the sea, then it must be universally received. Moreover, the promise of the Lord through Jeremiah is that it will no longer be necessary for anyone to teach his neighbor, ". . . saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." ([Jeremiah 31:34](#).)

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The Twelve Tribes of Israel

Question: "We would like to be put straight on the twelve tribes of Israel. We have been discussing them in our class, and it seems that we have several conflicting opinions. We know that Jacob had twelve sons, but in a book with the title 'God Planted a Tree,' we find recorded the statement that Ephraim and Manasseh, sons of Joseph, took the places of Reuben and Simeon, and in the lesson book, 'Life in Ancient America,' it also states that Ephraim was substituted for Reuben as one of the tribes in Israel. It was pointed out that in the Old Testament, Reuben and Simeon are named as tribes and that they received inheritances when the land of Canaan was divided. How did Ephraim and Manasseh become tribes and still there were only twelve?

"Another question: which tribes formed the kingdom of Israel and which the kingdom of Judah, when the tribes were divided?"

Answer: 1. The story of the tribes of Israel, their origin, inheritances, divisions, rebellions, and final loss of their inheritances, is clearly recorded in the books of the Old Testament. Jacob, whom the Lord named Israel, had twelve sons, namely: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin, Gad, Asher, Dan, and Naphtali. Each became the ancestor of a tribe in Israel and received patriarchal blessings as such when Jacob went down into Egypt. He also blessed the two sons of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, and adopted them as his own sons, and they were blessed as founders of tribes in Israel.

The idea that these two sons of Joseph replaced Reuben and Simeon springs from the words of Jacob

when he chose them for adoption, as recorded in [Genesis Chapter 48, verse 5](#), as follows: "And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine." A careful reading will show the true meaning to be that they should be sons of Jacob just the same as Reuben and Simeon were, not that they were to replace them. Then again some confusion has come because it is recorded in [1 Chronicles 5:1](#), that while Reuben was the firstborn, because of his transgression the birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph. The matter of birthright, however, did not have anything to do with a place among the tribes of Israel, and Ephraim was not substituted as a tribe for Reuben.

AUTHORITY OF PRIESTHOOD GIVEN TO LEVITES

When Israel came out of Egypt under the guidance of Moses, the Lord prepared to make of the twelve tribes a royal priesthood and honor them by choosing from among them faithful men to hold the Melchizedek Priesthood. Because of their constant rebellion and murmuring, in which they had Aaron make for them a golden calf to worship when they thought that Moses was dead, the Lord's anger was kindled against them. Therefore he took Moses and the Melchizedek Priesthood from them and left them with another authority or priesthood, which he bestowed upon Aaron and his sons, and chosen men of the tribe of Levi, (D. & C. 84:23-27.) to be the priests and ministers for all the tribes of Israel. According to this calling Aaron and the tribe of Levi, to which Aaron belonged, obtained this great honor, and henceforth the Levites were not numbered as one of the tribes, for the Lord said he would scatter them through all of the tribes to be their ministers and their priests. Therefore he commanded Moses as follows:

But the Levites after the tribe of their fathers were not numbered among them.

For the Lord has spoken unto Moses, saying,

Only thou shalt not number the tribe of Levi, neither take the sum of them among the children of Israel: ([Numbers 1:47-49](#).)

And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine;

Because all the firstborn are mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine they shall be: I am the Lord. (*Ibid.*, 3:12-13.)

So the tribes of Israel lost the glorious privilege of holding and officiating in the Melchizedek Priesthood, and in his anger the Lord added to what he gave them, the carnal law, which continued with Israel until the resurrection of Jesus Christ when it was fulfilled. ([3 Nephi 15:3-6](#).)

Again it was a rebuke to the tribes of Israel when the Lord said further to Moses:

And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons: they are wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel.

And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death. ([Numbers 3:9-10](#).)

We discover that it was Levi and Joseph who were not numbered as tribes in Israel. Joseph received a double portion through his sons, each inheriting through their adoption by their grandfather, and Levi's descendants becoming the ministers to all the other tribes of Israel.

THE KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

2. After the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam ascended the throne of Israel. Then there came to him representatives from the tribes under the leadership of Jereboam, requesting that the heavy taxes which had been levied by Solomon be reduced. This King Rehoboam refused to do, and in his reply to this petition he spoke roughly and said: "My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." ([1 Kings 12:14](#).) Thereupon the complaining tribes rebelled and set up Jeroboam as their king. Two tribes remained loyal to Rehoboam, and he reigned over them in Jerusalem. From that time forth Israel was divided into the two kingdoms, Israel composed of ten tribes, and the kingdom of Judah, with the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin and such scattering of other tribes who resided in the territory of Judah.

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The Keys of the Ministering of Angels

Question: *"Will you please consider the following question? What is meant by the keys of the ministering of angels as stated in the conferring of the Aaronic Priesthood on Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery by John?"*

Answer: The answer to this question in brief is that the Lord revealed it to be the privilege of those holding the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood to have the visitation and ministering of angels if the occasion should arise, in relation to the temporal matters of the Church. It is presumed that your question calls for further details in relation to this priesthood and its powers.

When Israel came out of Egypt it was the intention of the Lord to organize the men of all the tribes into a royal priesthood, conferring upon them all the gifts and privileges of the higher or Melchizedek Priesthood which holds the keys of the fulness of the gospel and ". . . holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God." ([D. & C. 84:19](#).) Because of rebellion and unwillingness to hearken to the commandments given by Moses, these great privileges and blessings were denied them, although Moses did all in his power to teach and sanctify them.

But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fulness of his glory.

Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also;

And the lesser priesthood continued, which priesthood holdeth the key of the ministering of angels and the preparatory gospel;

Which gospel is the gospel of repentance and of baptism, and the remission of sins, and the law of carnal commandments, which the Lord in his wrath caused to continue with the house of Aaron among the children of Israel until John, whom God raised up, being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. (*Ibid.*, 84:24-27.)

ISRAEL BECAME SUBJECT TO "LAW OF MOSES"

If Israel had remained faithful they would have had all the blessings and privileges of the Melchizedek Priesthood, but instead they were confined to the scope of the blessings of the Aaronic Priesthood and also became subject to the measures of the "Law of Moses," which contained many temporal laws, some of which were severe and drastic in their nature. This condition continued until the resurrection of Jesus Christ when this carnal law was fulfilled and was replaced by the fulness of the gospel. The Aaronic Priesthood did not lose the right to the ministering of angels in the days of restoration when Jesus Christ came to fulfil the law, and this power continues in the Church today, which is fully attested in the words of John.

We should understand, however, that while Israel was restricted in the power of the priesthood from the days of Moses to the days of the ministry of our Savior, yet the prophets in Israel, such as Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, were blessed with the Melchizedek Priesthood, but this priesthood was not given to others. Most of these prophets were not of the tribe of Levi, but were from the tribes of Judah, Ephraim, and others.

The Prophet Joseph Smith said, "All Priesthood is Melchizedek, but there are different portions or degrees of it. That portion which brought Moses to speak with God face to face was taken away; but that which brought the ministry of angels remained." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 180-181.)

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Will the Levitical Priesthood Remain on the Earth?

Question: "*Will the Levitical Priesthood remain on the earth after the sons of Levi make an offering in righteousness unto the Lord?*"

Answer: The Priesthood of Aaron, or the Levitical Priesthood, will not end when the sons of Levi make their offering in righteousness. This priesthood continued in the Church which was organized by our Redeemer and continued until the days when apostasy drove the Church into the wilderness. There will be need for this priesthood in this dispensation at least as long as time endures and mortals dwell upon the earth.

Before the days of Moses the office which administered in temporal things was the Melchizedek Priesthood. We find in the days of Abraham that Melchizedek, king of Salem, received tithes and Abraham paid tithes to him. Evidently Isaac and Jacob, who paid tithes, did so to some one appointed holding the Melchizedek Priesthood. The Lesser, or Aaronic Priesthood, was instituted when Israel was in the wilderness and that priesthood officiated in most of the affairs of the people of Israel until the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood by our Savior. However, the offices of the Aaronic Priesthood were not discarded in the Church in the day of the apostles, and have been continued in the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times. We have need for this priesthood now and will until the end of time and as long as temporal matters are essential to the progress of the Church. It is to be presumed that the higher priesthood will be held by all in the celestial kingdom when the earth is prepared for its exaltation.

Were the Nephite Twelve Apostles?

Question: *"In our class the question was asked if the twelve chosen by the Savior among the Nephites were apostles? At the same time the apostles chosen by Jesus in Palestine were on the earth the Lord chose twelve also on the American continent whom he called disciples. I have felt that there could not be more than one set of apostles on the earth at any given time, but some members of the class thought otherwise, and we have been confused."*

Answer: The twelve men chosen by our Savior among the Nephites are called disciples in the Book of Mormon. Nephi wrote of his vision given nearly six hundred years before the birth of the Lord as follows:

And the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold the twelve disciples of the lamb, who are chosen to minister unto thy seed.

And he said unto me: Thou rememberest the twelve apostles of the Lamb? Behold they are they who shall judge the twelve tribes of Israel; wherefore, the twelve ministers of thy seed shall be judged of them; for ye are of the house of Israel.

And these twelve ministers whom thou beholdest shall judge thy seed. And, behold, they are righteous forever; for because of their faith in the Lamb of God their garments are made white in his blood. ([1 Nephi 12:8-10](#).)

In fulfilment of this prophecy when the Savior came to the Nephites, he chose twelve men and gave them authority to minister in his name among the Nephites on this American continent in all the ordinances essential to their salvation. These twelve went forth healing the sick and performing many miracles and administering the ordinances as they had been commanded to do. The fulness of the gospel with the power and the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood were given to the Nephites the same as they were to the Church on the Eastern Hemisphere. Moreover, the Lord informed them that the law that had been given to Moses, including the offering of sacrifices by the shedding of blood, had been done away in him.

SPECIAL WITNESSES FOR CHRIST

While in every instance the Nephite twelve are spoken of as disciples, the fact remains that they had been endowed with divine authority to be special witnesses for Christ among their own people. Therefore, they were virtually apostles to the Nephite race, although their jurisdiction was, as revealed to Nephi, eventually to be subject to the authority and jurisdiction of Peter and the twelve chosen in Palestine. According to the definition prevailing in the world an apostle is a witness for Christ, or one who evangelizes a certain nation or people. "A zealous advocate of a doctrine or cause." Therefore the Nephite twelve became apostles, as special witnesses, just as did Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times.

When the Savior taught the Nephites he informed them that he had "other sheep" which were not of the

Nephites, neither of the land of Jerusalem, and these also were to hear his voice and be ministered to by him. It is reasonable for us to conclude that among these others who were hidden from the rest of the world, he likewise chose disciples—perhaps twelve—to perform like functions and minister unto their people with the same fulness of divine authority.

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The Priesthood of the Nephites

Question: *"While studying our Book of Mormon lesson in our Sunday School class our attention was called to the statement in the Teachers' Supplement which says that the Nephites did not have the Aaronic Priesthood. Members of the class questioned the authenticity of this and called attention to the words in Moroni, chapter three, which clearly state that they ordained priests and teachers, to preach repentance and remission of sins. Then we read in [2 Nephi 5:26](#), that Nephi consecrated Jacob and Joseph 'that they should be priests and teachers over the land of my people.' Will you kindly put us straight on this matter?"*

Answer: After the tribes of Israel were brought out of Egypt the Lord proposed to make them a royal priesthood, conferring on members of all the tribes the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood; but when they made a golden calf to worship in the absence of Moses and were in constant murmuring and rebellion, the Lord denied them this great honor and took Moses and the Higher Priesthood from them, and decreed that this priesthood should not be given them and that they "should not enter into his rest, while in the wilderness, which rest is the fulness of his glory." ([D. & C. 84:22-27](#). [Numbers, chapters 1-3](#).) From that time until the coming of our Redeemer, Israel was subject to the Aaronic Priesthood and the "carnal law," which was added. Instead of taking the firstborn of the families, the Lord separated the tribe of Levi and made them the priests of the people.

For the Lord had spoken unto Moses, saying,

Only thou shalt not number the tribe of Levi, neither take the sum of them among the children of Israel. ([Numbers 1:48-49](#).)

NO LEVITES AMONG THE NEPHITES

The Nephites were descendants of Joseph. Lehi discovered this when reading the brass plates. He was a descendant of Manasseh, and Ishmael, who accompanied him with his family, was of the tribe of Ephraim. ([Alma 10:3](#); *Improvement Era*, Vol. 8, p. 781; *J. of D.*, Vol. 23, p. 184.)

Therefore there were no Levites who accompanied Lehi to the Western Hemisphere. Under these conditions the Nephites officiated by virtue of the Melchizedek Priesthood from the days of Lehi to the days of the appearance of our Savior among them. It is true that Nephi "consecrated Jacob and Joseph" that they should be priests and teachers over the land of the Nephites, but the fact that plural terms *priests and teachers* were used indicates that this was not a reference to the definite office in the priesthood in either case, but it was a general assignment to teach, direct, and admonish the people. Otherwise the terms *priest and teacher* would have been given, in the singular. Additional light is thrown on this appointment showing that these two brothers of Nephi held the Melchizedek Priesthood,

in the sixth chapter, second verse of 2 Nephi, where Jacob makes this explanation regarding the priesthood which he and Joseph held:

Behold, my beloved brethren, I, Jacob, having been called of God, and ordained *after the manner of his holy order*, and having been consecrated by my brother Nephi, unto whom ye look as a king or a protector, and on whom ye depend for safety, behold ye know that I have spoken unto you exceeding many things.

This seems to be a confirmation of the ordinations that he and his brother Joseph received in the Melchizedek Priesthood. All through the Book of Mormon we find references to the Nephites officiating by virtue of the Higher Priesthood after the holy order. Alma, discoursing on the subject before the people of the city of Ammonihah said:

And again, my brethren, I would cite your minds forward to the time when the Lord God gave these commandments unto his children; and I would that ye should remember that the Lord God ordained priests, after his holy order, which was after the order of his Son, to teach these things unto the people. ([Alma 13:1](#). See also [D. & C. 107:1-4](#).)

In the opening verses of Alma, Chapter 43, Mormon records the following:

And now it came to pass that the sons of Alma did go forth among the people, to declare the word unto them. And Alma also, himself, could not rest, and he also went forth.

Now we will say no more concerning their preachings, except that they preached the word, and the truth, according to the spirit of prophecy and revelation; and they preached after the holy order of God by which they were called.

NEPHITES ADMINISTERED UNDER MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD

From these and numerous other passages we learn that it was by the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood that the Nephites administered from the time they left Jerusalem until the time of the coming of Jesus Christ. By the power of this priesthood they baptized, confirmed, and ordained. During these years they also observed the law of Moses. They offered sacrifice and performed the duties which in Israel had been assigned to the priests and Levites. They observed in every detail the requirements of the law. When the Savior came to them, he fulfilled the carnal law and did away with the sacrifice by the shedding of blood of animals. He informed the Nephites that in him the law of Moses was fulfilled. ([2 Nephi 25:24-30](#); [3 Nephi 1:23-25](#); [9:15-17](#); [15:2-8](#).)

When the Savior came to the Nephites, he established the Church in its fulness among them, and he informed them that former things had passed away, for they were all fulfilled in him. He gave the Nephites all the authority of the priesthood which we exercise today. Therefore we are justified in the belief that not only was the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood conferred, but also the Aaronic, just as we have it in the Church today; and this Aaronic Priesthood remained with them from this time until, through wickedness, all priesthood ceased. We may be assured that in the days of Moroni the Nephites did ordain teachers and priests in the Aaronic Priesthood; but before the visit of the Savior they officiated in the Melchizedek Priesthood.

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What Are Pastors and Evangelists?

Question: "Why do we not have pastors and evangelists in the Church as mentioned in the Prophet Joseph Smith's thirteenth Article of Faith? If they are names for bishops and missionaries, why then don't we call them such?"

The dictionary definition of a pastor is a correct one even from our understanding of this term; it is "a Christian minister who has a church or congregation under his official charge." The term pastor does not refer to an order in the priesthood, like deacon, priest, elder, seventy, and so on, but is a general term applied to an officer who presides over a ward, branch in a mission or a stake, and it could even be applied to a president of a stake. There are several references to pastors in the Old Testament, particularly in the Book of Jeremiah. I quote one or two of these showing that this is a general term applied to the priests and teachers in Israel, and not to an order of the priesthood:

And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. ([Jeremiah 3:15](#))

For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the Lord: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered. (*Ibid.*, 10:21.)

As for me, I have not hastened from being a pastor to follow thee: neither have I desired the woeful day; thou knowest: that which came out of my lips was right before thee. (*Ibid.*, 17:16.)

From these passages you will see that it is clear that the Lord has reference to the priests and rulers over the children of Israel and not to an order, or office, in the priesthood. The Prophet Joseph Smith was following Paul's expression ([Ephesians 4:11](#).) and had reference to those who had jurisdiction over the flocks ([Jeremiah 23:1-2](#).) or branches of the Church. We can say truthfully that a bishop is a pastor; so is an elder who has charge of a branch of the Church, or a president of a stake who has direction of a number of wards and branches.

"PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL"

According to the dictionary and the generally accepted view of the word *evangelist*, it is "a preacher who goes from place to place holding services especially with a view of church revivals." He is a "preacher of the gospel." The term *evangel* means gospel, or good news.

Now consult your dictionary (See *Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary*.) further and you will find this: "A Mormon officer of the Melchizedek or Higher Priesthood, whose special function is to bless." After reading this, turn to page 381, Volume 3, of the *Documentary History of the Church*, or to *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, page 151, and you will find the Prophet's explanation in relation to the evangelist. In case you do not have these books I will quote the passage for you.

An Evangelist is a Patriarch, even the oldest man of the blood of Joseph or of the seed of Abraham. Wherever the Church of Christ is established in the earth, there should be a patriarch for the benefit of the posterity of the Saints, as it was with Jacob in giving his patriarchal blessings unto his sons.

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Should Deacons Be Married?

Question: *"According to I Timothy, Chapter 3, verses 12-13, it refers to deacons as husbands of one wife, etc. Why is the office of a deacon in the Church today held by very young boys?"*

Answer: It was the judgment of Paul that a deacon in that day should be a married man. That does not apply to our day. Conditions were different in the days of Paul. In that day a minister was not considered qualified to take part in the ministry until he was thirty years of age. Under those conditions deacons, teachers, and priests were mature men. This is not the requirement today. There are in all kinds of churches today ministers who are under that age, and there is no requirement in the Church in this dispensation that a person must be a matured man before he can take part in the ministry or hold the priesthood. Nor was it the rule in very ancient times, for we learn that Noah was only ten years of age when he was given the priesthood under the hands of Methuselah. ([D. & C. 107:52](#).) John the Baptist was ordained when only eight days old when he was ordained by an angel, ". . . to overthrow the kingdom of the Jews, and to make straight the way of the Lord before the face of his people." (*Ibid.*, 84:28.) but John did not enter this ministry until shortly before the coming of Christ to be baptized and enter his ministry. John was a few months older than our Savior.

So you see there is nothing wrong, nothing out of order, in what we are doing, for it is by revelation from the Lord.

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The Keys of Missionary Work

Question: *"Will you please tell us which of the ancient prophets came and restored the keys of missionary work?"*

Answer: The keys or power to go forth and proclaim the gospel was restored to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery when Peter, James, and John conferred upon them the Melchizedek Priesthood before the organization of the Church. It is true that John the Baptist had conferred upon them the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood before the Melchizedek Priesthood was restored. This was necessary because the time had come for them to be baptized and hold this priesthood preparatory to the coming of the higher priesthood. We read in the Doctrine and Covenants ([D. & C. 84:26-27](#).) that the Aaronic Priesthood holds the keys of the preparatory gospel; that is to say, the teaching of faith, repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins. This authority was given on the fifteenth day of May, 1829, but there was no commandment given for Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to go forth to teach and baptize until the Church was organized, although a few earnest souls who were acquainted with the restoration had sought baptism and had been baptized. It remained for Peter, James, and John to come with the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood to complete the authority to proclaim the gospel to the world.

When the Savior ordained his apostles and seventy at the beginning of his ministry, he gave them the authority to go forth, first to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, saying, ". . . The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." ([Matthew 10:7-8](#). See [Luke 10:1-11](#).) But their ministry at first, or until after his resurrection, was

confined to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." After his resurrection he said to them:

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. ([Mark 16:15-16.](#))

This was their call and the authority he gave to them to carry the message into all the world, with all the keys of authority for the salvation of mankind. It was the Savior in that day who bestowed the authority of the missionary work, and in the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times, he sent Peter, James, and John to restore this authority and send forth the word of eternal life into all the world.

A REVELATION FROM THE LORD

Even before the restoration of the gospel and the organization of the Church, the Lord called men to go forth as missionaries for the Church, but cautioned them that they were to wait until the Church was organized. ([D. & C. 11:21-28.](#)) To the Prophet's father, who came seeking to know the will of the Lord, the Lord gave a revelation which applies to all those who receive the priesthood. In this revelation he said:

Therefore O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day. . . .

For behold the field is white already to harvest; and lo, he that thrusteth in his sickle with his might, the same layeth up in store that he perisheth not, but bringeth salvation to his soul. (*Ibid.*, 4:2, 4.)

On April 11, 1830, the first Sunday after the organization of the Church, Oliver Cowdery opened the door for the missionary work by preaching the first public discourse in this dispensation. The meeting was by appointment in the home of "Father" Peter Whitmer. (Smith, Joseph Fielding, *Essentials in Church History*, p. 95.) Early in the month of June, Samuel Harrison Smith, brother of the Prophet, started on what may be called the first missionary journey for the Church. (*Ibid.*, p. 103.) From that time forth others were appointed to take missionary journeys into all parts of the Eastern States, Canada, and many of the Southern states; branches were soon organized in all of these parts. In this same year and the following year many missionaries were appointed to travel two by two to the North, the East, and the South, and even to carry the gospel to the Lamanites. Thomas B. Marsh, Ezra Thayer, Northrop Sweet, Parley P. Pratt, Ziba Peterson, Orson Pratt, and many others were called to the mission field. In the fall of 1830, Oliver Cowdery and Parley P. Pratt and others were sent on a mission to the Lamanites on the western borders of Missouri. (*Ibid.*, p. 112.)

"TEACH ONE ANOTHER THE DOCTRINE OF THE KINGDOM"

In the closing months of the year 1832, the Lord called the missionaries who were out preaching to return that they might be endowed and receive further light, and then they were to return to the mission fields with greater power and knowledge concerning the work of proselyting. They were to teach "one another the doctrine of the kingdom," that they might be instructed "more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God," that was expedient for their understanding. They were to prepare themselves with knowledge, "Of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms—" They were to do this that they might be better prepared when the Lord should send them out again "to magnify the calling whereunto I have called you, and the mission with which I have

commissioned you."([D. & C. 88:77-80.](#))

After they had received this endowment, the Lord declared:

Behold, I *sent* you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor.

Therefore, they are left without excuse, and their sins are upon their own heads. (Ibid., verses 81-82.)

This commission to go forth which was given in the beginning is still in force and binding on every missionary who goes forth today to declare the gospel of salvation in the world.

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The Sons of God and the Daughters of Men

Question: *"Will you kindly explain the meaning of the first two verses in Genesis, Chapter six? There seems to be a difference of interpretation. The verses in question are as follows:*

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

"That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose."

Answer: The verses following this quotation indicate that this manner of marriage was offensive in the sight of God, and therefore he reduced the age of man upon the earth. There is a prevailing doctrine in the Christian world that these sons of God were heavenly beings who came down and married the daughters of men and thus came a superior race on the earth, the result bringing the displeasure of the Lord. This foolish notion is the result of lack of proper information, and because the correct information is not found in the Book of Genesis Christian peoples have been led astray.

The correct information regarding these unions is revealed in the inspired interpretation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Book of Moses. Without doubt when this scripture was first written, it was perfectly clear, but scribes and translators in the course of time, not having divine inspiration, changed the meaning to conform to their incorrect understanding. These verses in the Prophet's revision give us a correct meaning, and from them we learn why the Lord was angry with the people and decreed to shorten the span of life and to bring upon the world the flood of purification. The verses referring to this bit of history are as follows:

And Noah and his sons hearkened unto the Lord, and gave heed, and they were called the sons of God.

And when these men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, the sons of men saw that those daughters were fair, and they took them wives, even as they chose.

And the Lord said unto Noah: The daughters of thy sons have sold themselves; for behold mine anger is kindled against the sons of men, for they will not hearken to my voice.

And it came to pass that Noah prophesied, and taught the things of God, even as it was in the beginning. ([Moses 8:13-16.](#))

DAUGHTERS OF NOAH MARRIED SONS OF MEN

Because the daughters of Noah married the sons of men contrary to the teachings of the Lord, his anger was kindled, and this offense was one cause that brought to pass the universal flood. You will see that the condition appears reversed in the Book of Moses. It was the daughters of the sons of God who were marrying the sons of men, which was displeasing unto the Lord. The fact was, as we see it revealed, that the daughters who had been born, evidently under the covenant, and were the daughters of the sons of God, that is to say of those who held the priesthood, were transgressing the commandment of the Lord and were marrying *out of the Church*. Thus they were cutting themselves off from the blessings of the priesthood contrary to the teachings of Noah and the will of God.

The Lord has revealed to us in this dispensation that those who obey his will, will be called the sons of God. In the days of Adam the Lord decreed that this should be the case:

And he [Adam] heard a voice out of heaven, saying: Thou art baptized with fire, and with the Holy Ghost. This is the record of the Father, and the Son, from henceforth and forever;

And thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity.

Behold, thou art one in me, a son of God; and thus may all become sons. Amen. (*Ibid.*, 6: 66-68.)

Today there are foolish daughters of those who hold this same priesthood who are violating this commandment and marrying the sons of men; there are also some of the sons of those who hold the priesthood who are marrying the daughters of men. All of this is contrary to the will of God just as much as it was in the days of Noah.

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Who Are the Gentiles?

Question: *"In our class we are studying The Acts of the Apostles, and the question arose, who are the Gentiles? There was a difference of opinion. Are the Gentiles of the blood of Israel? Will you kindly inform us?"*

The definition in the *Standard Dictionary* of a Gentile is as follows: "(1) Among the Jews, a person of a non-Jewish race or faith; one who is not a Jew. (2) Among Christians, one who is neither Jew or Christian; a pagan; heathen. (3) Among the Mormons, one not a Mormon. 2 *Gram.* A noun or an adjective denoting race or country. 3 A member of a gens or clan."

This definition does not enlighten us in relation to the original meaning, nor does it accurately fit the doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There are many races on the earth not members of the Church whom the Mormons do not class as Gentiles. The Polynesians, the American

Indians, Jews, Arabs, and other races of Semitic origin who trace their lineage back to Abraham are not Gentiles in the strict sense of the word. The African Negroes, according to Mormon teachings, are not Gentiles.

The first use of the word is found in [Genesis 10:5](#), in reference to the sons of Japheth, son of Noah, and reads as follows:

By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.

Both Dr. Adam Clark and Dr. Thomas Scott, in their comprehensive commentaries refer to the people who settled Europe, Asia Minor, England, the United States, and Canada, as being of the Gentiles.

ORIGINAL SIGNIFICANCE LOST

The name *Gentile* to a great extent has lost its original significance. It was not used in an opprobrious sense and not in derision in biblical times, but referred to certain peoples who had not descended from Abraham. However, in the blessing the Lord gave to Abraham he extended favors even to the Gentiles:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations;

And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their Father. ([Abraham 2:9-10](#).)

Before the days of the coming of Jesus in his ministry the Jews looked upon those not of their race as inferior because they were not the seed of Abraham. They boasted of their superiority because they were of the seed of Abraham. When the Savior came in his ministry, he may have lent some color to this thought, for he declared that he was sent only to the house of Israel. One striking example was his answer to the woman of Canaan: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." ([Matthew 15:24](#).) Likewise in the call of his apostles he said: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (*Ibid.*, 10:5-6.) The ministry of our Lord was confined to Israel, except in the special cases where those of other nations by exceeding faith sought him for blessings. After his resurrection he commissioned his servants to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; thus he widened the field to cover the whole earth. (See [Mark 16:15-16](#).) It was difficult for his apostles to grasp the significance of this commission, so well had they been trained in the thought that the gospel was for Israel only. Following the conversion of Cornelius their views concerning the gospel broadened, and they went forth as they had been commanded to do.

THE FIRST HAVE BECOME LAST

In the Dispensation of the Meridian of Time, the gospel was first preached to the Jews, and when they rejected it, then it was carried to the Gentiles. In this Dispensation of the Fulness of Times, the gospel is first to the Gentiles and then is to go to the Jews. The first have become last and the last first in this dispensation in fulfilment of the teachings of our Lord.

The ancient prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others understood this order and great promises were made by them to the Gentiles. In the restoration of the gospel in our day it came "by way of the Gentile," (Title page of Book of Mormon; [D. & C. 20:9](#).) and to the Gentile nations it has been taught, and by them it

will be carried to the Jews and the scattered house of Israel.

Latter-day Saints pride themselves because they are of Israel; but they are also of the Gentiles. We are the descendants of those members of the house of Israel who were scattered among the Gentiles to be a blessing to the Gentile nations and make them of the blood of Israel through the gospel. The scattering of Israel among the nations was not intended merely as a punishment, but as the leaven which would leaven the Gentile nations and make them of the blood of Abraham, according to the promises given to Abraham. The Book of Mormon came by way of the Prophet Joseph Smith, a descendant of Ephraim, yet it came "by way of the Gentile," and in the time of the Gentiles.

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How Was Lehi a Descendant of the Jews?

Question: "*In [1 Nephi 5:14](#), we are informed that Lehi was a descendant of Joseph, and in [2 Nephi 30:4](#), it states that the Nephites were descendants of the Jews. Since the Jews were descendants of Judah, how can these statements be harmonized?*"

Answer: It is true that Lehi and his family were descendants of Joseph through the lineage of Manasseh ([Alma 10:3](#)), and Ishmael was a descendant of Ephraim, according to the statement of the Prophet Joseph Smith. That the Nephites were descendants of Joseph is in fulfilment of the blessings given to Joseph by his father Israel. The Nephites were of the Jews, not so much by descent as by citizenship, although in the long descent from Jacob, it could be possible of some mixing of the tribes by intermarriage. It should be remembered that in the days of Rehoboam, son of Solomon, ten of the twelve tribes of Israel revolted and were known as the kingdom of Israel from that time on until they were carried away into Assyria. The other two tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained loyal to Rehoboam and were known as the kingdom of Judah. Lehi was a citizen of Jerusalem, in the kingdom of Judah. Presumably his family had lived there for several generations, and all of the inhabitants of the kingdom of Judah, no matter which tribe they had descended through, were known as Jews. The condition is comparable to conditions today, for example: Many members of the Church have been gathered out of England, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, and other foreign lands. Coming to this country they have taken out citizenship papers, and then they and their descendants are known as Americans, being citizens of this country. There is also a comparable example in the case of Paul the apostle. When he was arrested on complaint of the Jews, the chief captain mistook him for an Egyptian who had created a rebellion, and Paul said to the captain, ". . . I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people." When the privilege was granted, Paul spoke to the angry Jews and said: "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day." ([Acts 21:37-39](#); [22:3](#).) In writing his epistles to the Roman saints and also to the saints at Philippi, Paul said: ". . . For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham of the tribe of Benjamin." ([Romans 11:1](#); [Philippians 3:5](#).)

Not only in the Book of Mormon are the descendants of Lehi called Jews, but also in the Doctrine and Covenants. In Section 19, verse 27, this is found: "Which is my word to the Gentile, that soon it may go to the Jew, of whom the Lamanites are a remnant, that they may believe the gospel, and look not for a

Messiah to come who has already come." Again, in giving instruction to the elders who had journeyed from Kirtland to Missouri, the Lord revealed the place for the building of the temple and gave instruction for the purchase of land "lying westward, even unto the line running directly between Jew and Gentile."([D. & C. 57:4](#).) This line westward was the dividing line between the whites and Indians.

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Administering to the Sick

Question: *"If a man were alone with a sick person could he anoint with oil and give the blessing and seal it by himself?"*

"Is it proper to anoint the afflicted parts of the body?"

"Is it permissible to administer the oil internally?"

"Is it proper for an elder to take with him a brother holding the Aaronic Priesthood to assist in administering to the sick?"

"If a man and his wife were alone with a sick person, could he anoint with oil and then seal the anointing with his wife assisting using the priesthood she holds jointly with her husband?"

"James says when a man is administered to if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. How does the elder get power to remit his sin?"

Answer: During the past few weeks several questions have been received from different parts of the Church asking these and like questions in relation to the administration of the sick. Therefore a detailed article on the question of administration seems to be in order that these several points which, seemingly, are not understood may be made clear that no confusion may be found among the members holding the priesthood.

Administering to the sick has been an ordinance of the gospel practiced from the beginning when the authority of the priesthood has been found on the earth. The usual procedure is stated by James:

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. ([James 5:13-15](#).)

THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

We read in the New Testament how Jesus laid his hands upon individuals and healed them. ([Mark 6:5, 13; 16:18; Luke 13:12-13](#).) At times, because of the abundant faith of the afflicted, the Savior healed them by just a word, but his command to his disciples was that they should lay their hands upon the

sick. This ordinance was not one that was introduced for the first time in the Dispensation of the Meridian of Time, for in the Old Testament are numerous cases of healing. Two very interesting cases are the raising of the widow's son by Elijah;([1 Kings 17:19-24.](#)) and the similar restoration of the dead son of the Shunammite woman.([2 Kings 4:25-35.](#)) This great gift was manifest after the resurrection of Jesus during the sojourn of his apostles on the earth. Following their passing the spiritual gifts ceased and the anointing with oil and the blessing of the sick came to an end; not because these gifts were no longer needed, but because faith had departed from the souls of men and the priesthood had been taken from the earth. Henceforth the cry has been heard that these gifts were only intended for the days of the apostles and are no longer needed. Nevertheless, there have been many times when sincere, devout people who have endeavored to observe the commandments of the Lord to the best of their knowledge have been blessed and healed through the prayer of faith. The prayers of honest souls who sincerely seek blessings from the Lord are often answered and the Lord accepts their faith.

In this dispensation the Lord has spoken and given commandment in relation to the administration of the sick in the following words:

And whosoever among you are sick, and have not faith to be healed, but believe, shall be nourished with all tenderness, with herbs and mild food, and that not by the hand of an enemy.

And the elders of the church, two or more, shall be called, and shall pray for and lay their hands upon them in my name; and if they die they shall die unto me, and if they live they shall live unto me.([D. & C. 42:43-44.](#))

TWO OR MORE ELDERS CALLED

The detail in anointing and blessing the sick is as follows: Two or more elders should be called for the purpose. One elder should pour the oil from the bottle containing pure olive oil, which has been consecrated, upon the crown of the head of the sick person. (One drop taken from a medicine dropper is improper, nor should the oil be poured from a spoon.) The brother anointing should not seal the anointing but leave that to the second elder who offers the prayer of administration. The sick person should be called by name in the anointing, and it should be done in the name of Jesus Christ and by authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood according to the revelation, and to the end that the sick person may be healed. After the ordinance of anointing is finished, the elders present, two or more including the one who anointed, will lay their hands upon the head of the sick and offer a prayer in faith in the name of Jesus Christ, and by virtue of the priesthood which they hold seal the anointing. If moved upon by the Spirit of the Lord, the brother who is voice may rebuke the illness and bless with life and health. Prayers and blessings for the sick need not be of great length, that which is essential should be uttered and then the prayer closed in the name of Jesus Christ. After the administration is finished, it is wisdom for the elders who officiate not to prolong their visit but cheerfully withdraw.

THE ANOINTING AND PRAYER OF FAITH

The following is taken from the MIA Manual of 1902-3, pp. 58-59:

The ordinance of administering to the sick usually consists of two parts: The anointing, and the prayer of faith. The first usually is performed by one of the elders. The sealing of the anointing is performed by all the elders gathered around the person and laying hands on him or her, one of them offering the prayer. The words to be used are not prescribed. In this anointing it is necessary to use the name of Messiah and to invoke the power of the priesthood; witnessing that the anointing is performed for the purpose of healing. In sealing the anointing the same name and authority should be used, and the statement made that the anointing for the healing of the sick is sealed, the disease rebuked, and the blessing of health promised. Any additions, conditions, or promises that are dictated by the inspiration of

the Lord, should of course be set forth in the prayer. Those officiating should exercise the strongest possible faith for the patient's recovery, and place themselves thoroughly under the influence of the Spirit of the Lord because in such cases much depends on the faith of the elders and the spirit that accompanies them. Faith to heal the sick is one of the most desirable gifts of the gospel, and should be sought by all the elders; and they should be in readiness at any time to exercise this power in behalf of the unfortunate.

And these things ye shall not do, except it be required of you by them who desire it, that the scriptures might be fulfilled; for ye shall do according to that which is written. (*Ibid.*, 24:14.)

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

"If a man were alone with a sick person should he anoint with oil and give the blessing and seal it by himself?"

If an elder is alone and no help available, and he is called on to administer to the sick, he has full authority both to anoint and seal the anointing.

"Is it proper to anoint the afflicted parts of the body?"

No. The anointing should be on the crown of the head. (It could be a matter of impropriety to anoint afflicted parts of the body.)

"Is it permissible to administer the oil internally?"

No. Taking the oil internally is not part of the administration. If persons who are ill wish to take oil internally, they are not forbidden, but many sicknesses will not be improved by oil in the stomach.

"Is it proper for an elder to take with him a brother holding the Aaronic Priesthood to assist in administering to the sick?"

This question has been answered by the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve as follows:

. . . it was the sense of the Council . . . that the practice [of administering] be confined to the elders; but in the case of absolute necessity, that is where an elder finds himself in the situation that he cannot avail himself of the company of another elder, he may, if opportunity affords, avail himself of the company of a member of the Aaronic Priesthood, or even a lay member, but for the purpose only of being supported by the faith of such member or members, the elder alone to officiate in the ordinance of administration; or the elder may administer alone without such assistance of a lay member or one holding the Aaronic Priesthood. (Journal History, Feb. 18, 1903.)

"If a man and his wife were alone with a sick person, could he anoint with the oil and then seal the anointing with his wife assisting using the priesthood she holds jointly with her husband?"

President Joseph F. Smith in *The Improvement Era*, Vol. 10, page 308, answered this question as follows:

"Does a wife hold the priesthood with her husband and may she lay hands on the sick with him, with authority?"

A wife does not hold the priesthood with her husband, but she enjoys the benefits thereof with him; and if she is requested to lay hands on the sick with him, or with any other officer holding the Melchizedek

Priesthood, she may do so with perfect propriety. It is no uncommon thing for a man and wife unitedly to administer to their children. . . .

The wife would lay on hands just as would a member of the Aaronic Priesthood, or a faithful brother without the priesthood, thus giving support by faith to the ordinance. The Prophet Joseph Smith said,

Respecting females administering for the healing of the sick, there could be no evil in it, if God gave his sanction by healing; that there could be no more sin in any female laying hands on and praying for the sick, than in wetting the face with water; it is no sin for anybody to administer that has faith, or if the sick have faith to be healed by their administration. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 224.)

Such an administration would not be by virtue of the priesthood, but a manifestation of faith.

"James says when a man administers to a sick person he has power to remit his sins; how does the elder get power to remit sins?"

It is not the elder who remits or forgives the sick man's sins, but the Lord. If by the power of faith and through the administration by the elders the man is healed it is evidence that his sins have been forgiven. It is hardly reasonable to think that the Lord will forgive the sins of a man who is healed if he has not repented. Naturally he would repent of his sins if he seeks for the blessing by the elders.

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Why Is Oil in Used in Administering to the Sick?

Question: *"Why is it that we use oil in administering to the sick? There is no reference in the Doctrine and Covenants directing its use. In our discussions this question has been raised, and why some other oil would not answer just as well as olive oil? When was this practice of anointing with oil introduced?"*

Answer: We use olive oil in administering to the sick because the Lord has instructed it. It is true there is no mention in the Doctrine and Covenants to the use of oil in administering to the sick, but there are references to the anointing with oil in the conferring of authority and sacred blessings. This practice has come down to us from the time of the organization of the Church, according to the pattern anciently given. It was an olive leaf that the dove brought to Noah indicating that the water of the flood was abated. From that time on the olive leaf or branch and the dove have been emblems of peace and purity. In many parables in the scripture, the olive tree is mentioned as symbolic of righteousness and having reference to the kingdom of God or the Church. In the fifth chapter of Jacob, in the Book of Mormon, is found a prophetic parable of the planting of branches of the "tame olive tree," or the house of Israel, in various corners of the earth, and how, when they grew and bore fruit and commenced to decay, the husbandman grafted into these branches of the main tree branches from the wild olive to see if they would revive. This parable portrays the scattering of Israel through the ages and is intensely interesting. Likewise, we find in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 101, there is a parable of the planting of twelve olive trees in the Lord's vineyard. This also has prophetic meaning. In [Revelation 11:4](#), the Lord speaks of his two witnesses as two olive trees, and in [Zechariah 4:11-14](#) is a similar prophetic parable. So we find through all the prophetic writings that olive trees and olive oil are emblems of sacredness and purity.

When the Prophet Joseph Smith sent to the brethren in Missouri a copy of the eighty-eighth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, he prized it so highly that he wrote to them saying: "I send you the olive leaf which we have plucked from the Tree of Paradise," thus applying the thought of purity and wisdom.

ANOINTING WITH OIL AN ANCIENT CUSTOM

The use of olive oil in anointing is from very ancient times. It was the custom to anoint prophets, kings, and holy messengers as a stamp or token of their official calling. In Leviticus, 8:6-12, is an interesting account of the calling of Aaron, and how Moses not only anointed Aaron, but likewise the altar and the vessels, and sanctified them with holy oil. Samuel also anointed Saul and proclaimed him king in Israel, and when Saul transgressed, David was anointed in his stead to be king of Israel. This custom continued in Israel until they were rejected by the Lord and scattered.

The olive tree and its golden oil were among the greatest treasures of Israel. The Lord said to Moses:

And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always.

In the tabernacle of the congregation without the vail, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the Lord: it shall be a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel. ([Exodus 27:20-21](#).)

No other kind of oil will do in anointing. It is very apparent that the oil from animal flesh would never do, and there is no other kind of oil that is held so sacredly and is more suited to the anointing than the oil of olive; moreover, the Lord has placed his stamp of approval on it.

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The Right Hand

Question: *"We have been taught in the Church that we should partake of the sacrament with the right hand. Why is this necessary? In our discussions we do not seem to be able to find anything telling us why this is so. Why is it wrong to partake of the sacrament with the left hand?"*

Answer: Questions of this nature are occasionally received. In one case we are informed that some brethren were advocating the partaking of the sacrament with either hand. Moreover, in one stake it was the custom to confirm and ordain persons by the officiators standing in a circle, raising their right hands, and placing their left hands on the heads of candidates to be blessed and ordained. Therefore, it is expedient that something be said about the use of the right hand in performing ordinations and partaking of the sacrament.

The performing of ordinances with the right hand in preference to the left is a well-established custom universally and is not confined to the Church. In various governments where oaths are administered, the candidate for office is asked to raise his right hand. There are occasions when he is sworn to give truthful testimony by placing his right hand on a copy of the Bible. This custom has come down from

the beginning, and from many scriptural passages we gather that it has always received divine sanction. When Abraham sent his servant to his kindred to find a wife for Isaac, he had the servant place his right hand under Abraham's thigh and swear to him that he would accomplish this mission. ([Genesis 24:2](#).) There are other occasions of similar import. One of the earliest incidents recorded is the blessing Jacob gave his grandsons, Manasseh and Ephraim. Manasseh was the elder, and as Joseph presented his sons to their grandfather, he presented Manasseh towards Jacob's right hand and Ephraim towards his left hand. The record states that Jacob "guiding his hands wittingly" placed his right hand on the head of Ephraim and his left hand on the head of Manasseh. Joseph protested, saying, "Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head." "I know it, my son, I know it:" said Jacob, "he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations." (*Ibid.*, 48:13-19.)

When the Egyptians were destroyed in the Red Sea, Israel sang: "Thy right hand, O Lord, is becoming glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy . . ."; ([Exodus 15:6](#).) and when Israel entered the land of their inheritance, the Lord instructed Moses in offering sacrifice to take the blood of the ram, "and put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about." With this ordinance and the sprinkling of the blood and anointing oil upon the altar, Aaron and his sons were "hallowed before the Lord." (See *Ibid.*, 29:20-21.)

REVEALED FROM HEAVEN

The showing favor to the right hand or side is not something invented by man but was revealed from the heavens in the beginning. To Isaiah the Lord said:

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee: yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. . . .

For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. ([Isaiah 41:10](#), [13](#).)

Again:

Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am the first, I am also the last.

Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together. (*Ibid.*, 48: 12-13.)

In the Psalms we read:

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. ([Psalm 110:1](#); [Matthew 22:44](#).)

The Lord, in speaking to his disciples, shortly before his death, said unto them:

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left.

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. ([Matthew 25:31-46.](#))

A SYMBOL OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

There are numerous passages in the scriptures referring to the right hand, indicating that it is a symbol of righteousness and was used in the making of covenants. When the Savior was taken before the high priest, scribes, and elders, the high priest said unto him: "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." In reply to this edict, Jesus said to him:

Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. (*Ibid.*, 26:63-64.)

When Stephen was slain, he looked up into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. ([Acts 7:55.](#))

The right hand or side is called the dexter and the left the sinister. Dexter connotes something favorable; sinister, something unfavorable or unfortunate. It is a well-established practice in the Church to partake of the sacrament with the right hand and also to anoint with the right hand, according to the custom which the scriptures indicate is, and always was, approved by divine injunction.

Urim and Thummim

Question: *"Will you please tell us something about the Urim and Thummim? Was the one used by the Prophet Joseph Smith the one had by Abraham? If so, how did he get it?"*

The history concerning the Urim and Thummim, or "Interpreters" as they are called in the Book of Mormon, is not very clear. Abraham had the Urim and Thummim by which he received revelations of the heavenly bodies, as he has recorded in the Book of Abraham. ([Abraham 3:1-4](#).) What became of these after his death we do not know. Aaron also had the Urim and Thummim, and these were, evidently from the reading of the Bible, handed down among the priests of Aaron from generation to generation. ([Exodus 28:30](#); [Leviticus 8:8](#); [Numbers 27:21](#); [Deuteronomy 33:8](#); [1 Samuel 28:6](#); [Ezra 2:63](#); [Nehemiah 7:65](#).) The Lord gave to the brother of Jared the Urim and Thummim which he brought with him to this continent. These were separate and distinct from the Urim and Thummim had by Abraham and in Israel in the days of Aaron. The account of this set is found in [Ether 3:22-28](#), and, in part, is as follows:

And behold, when ye shall come unto me, ye shall write them and shall seal them up, that no one can interpret them; for ye shall write them in a language that they cannot be read.

And behold, these two stones will I give unto thee, and ye shall seal them up also with the things which ye shall write.

For behold, the language which ye shall write I have confounded; wherefore I will cause in my own due time that these stones shall magnify to the eyes of men these things which ye shall write.

And the Lord said unto him: Write these things and seal them up; and I will show them in mine own due time unto the children of men.

And it came to pass that the Lord commanded him that he should seal up the two stones which he had received, and show them not, until the Lord should show them unto the children of men. ([Ether 3:22-24, 27-28](#).)

LIAHONA WAS NOT THE URIM AND THUMMIM

We have no record of Lehi bringing with him to America the Urim and Thummim. The Lord did give to Lehi the Liahona, which was a ball which directed him the way he should go, and writing appeared on it from time to time, but this was not the Urim and Thummim. ([D. & C. 17:1](#).)

King Mosiah possessed "... two stones which were fastened into the two rims of a bow" ([Mosiah 28:13](#).) called by the Nephites "Interpreters," with which he translated the Jaredite record, (*Ibid.*, 28:11-14.) and these were handed down from generation to generation for the purpose of interpreting languages. How Mosiah came into possession of these "two stones" or Urim and Thummim, the record does not tell us, more than to say that it was a "gift from God." (*Ibid.*, 21:28.) Mosiah had this "gift" or Urim and Thummim before the people of Limhi discovered the record of Ether. They may have been

received when the "large stone" was brought to Mosiah with engravings upon it, which he interpreted by the "gift and power of God." ([Omni 1:20-21](#).) They may have been given to him, or to some other prophet before his day, just as the brother of Jared received them—from the Lord.

BROTHER OF JARED AND MOSIAH HAD SAME STONES

That the Urim and Thummim, or two stones, given to the brother of Jared were those in the possession of Mosiah appears evident from the following statements in the Book of Mormon:

The brother of Jared was commanded to seal up his writings of the vision he had when Christ appeared to him, so that they could not be read by his people. This vision was in a language which was confounded, for it was not to go forth until after the resurrection of Christ. The Urim and Thummim were also sealed up so that they could not be used for the purpose of interpreting those sacred writings of this vision, until such time as the Lord should grant to man to interpret them. When they were to be revealed, they were to be interpreted by the aid of the same Urim and Thummim. ([Ether 3:21-28](#).)

The people of Limhi brought to Mosiah a record, ". . . engraven on plates of ore," ([Mosiah 21:27](#).) which record Mosiah translated by the aid of "two stones which were fastened into the two rims of a bow," and which gave an account of the Jaredites. (*Ibid.*, 28:11-19.) In translating this record Mosiah kept from going forth to the people that particular part forbidden of the Lord to be revealed until after he was lifted up upon the cross. ([Ether 4:1](#).) These sacred revelations given to the brother of Jared were kept from the Nephite people, as well as many other things, until after the resurrection of Christ. ([Alma 63:12](#).) After the appearing of the Savior to the Nephites, the vision of the brother of Jared was revealed to the Nephites. When Moroni made his abridgment of the record of Ether, he copied on his record the vision of the brother of Jared. ([Ether 4:2-7](#).) At the command of the Lord, however, Moroni also sealed up the greater things in this vision and the "interpreters" — which were the same "two stones" had by the brother of Jared, so that this vision should not be made known even in our day among the Gentiles, in the day of their wickedness; ([2 Nephi 27:8](#).) ". . . until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord." ([Ether 4:6](#).) So we today do not have the fulness of the account written and sealed up by the brother of Jared and again sealed by Moroni. This part of the record the Prophet Joseph Smith was forbidden to translate. We have, then, received but the "lesser part." ([3 Nephi 26:8-11](#).)

Joseph Smith received with the "breastplate" and the plates of the Book of Mormon, the Urim and Thummim, which were hid up by Moroni to come forth in the last days as a means by which the ancient record might be translated, which Urim and Thummim were given to the brother of Jared. ([D. & C. 17:1](#).)

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The Nature of Translated Beings

Question: *"I desire some information in relation to the nature of translated beings. It is my opinion that they occupy an intermediate position between mortality and immortality, where they are not subject to the pains and sicknesses common among mortal men. Some of the members of our class express the thought that they have become immortal, but by appointment, granted by the Lord, they remain on*

earth to accomplish some special work assigned to them. We are anxious to know just what their nature is."

Answer: If you and your friends will take time to read the twenty-eighth chapter of Third Nephi, you will find the complete answer to your question. Jesus granted to each of the twelve disciples he had chosen among the Nephites whatsoever they desired before he left them. Nine of them asked for the privilege of coming to him speedily after their earth mission was finished, and to them he said:

Blessed are ye because ye desired this thing of me; therefore, after that ye are seventy and two years old ye shall come unto me in my kingdom; and with me ye shall find rest.[\(3 Nephi 28:3\)](#)

The three others remained silent fearing to tell him what they desired, but he understood their thoughts, and to them he said:

Therefore, more blessed are ye, for ye shall never taste of death; but ye shall live to behold all the doings of the Father unto the children of men, even until all things shall be fulfilled according to the will of the Father, when I shall come in my glory with the powers of heaven.

And ye shall never endure the pains of death; but when I shall come in my glory ye shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye from mortality to immortality; and then shall ye be blessed in the kingdom of my Father.

And again, ye shall not have pain while ye shall dwell in the flesh, neither sorrow save it be for the sins of the world; and all this will I do because of the thing which ye have desired of me, for ye have desired that ye might bring the souls of men unto me, while the world shall stand.

And for this cause ye shall have fulness of joy; and ye shall sit down in the kingdom of my Father; yea, your joy shall be full, even as the Father hath given me fulness of joy; and ye shall be even as I am, and I am even as the Father; and the Father and I are one.*(Ibid., 28:7-10.)*

THE PROPHET MORMON'S INQUIRY

Later, as he was writing of this event, Mormon wondered just as your friends are wondering, if these three had been changed from mortality to immortality so he inquired of the Lord and thus he recorded his answer:

But behold, since I wrote, I have inquired of the Lord, and he hath made it manifest unto me that there must needs be a change wrought upon their bodies, or else it needs be that they must taste of death;

Therefore, that they might not taste of death there was a change wrought upon their bodies, that they might not suffer pain nor sorrow save it were for the sins of the world.

Now this change was not equal to that which shall take place at the last day; but there was a change wrought upon them, insomuch that Satan could have no power over them, that he could not tempt them; and they were sanctified in the flesh, that they were holy, and that the powers of the earth could not hold them.

And in this state they were to remain until the judgment day of Christ; and at that day they were to receive a greater change, and to be received into the kingdom of the Father to go no more out, but to dwell with God eternally in the heavens.*(Ibid., 28:37-40.)*

If we would only think, we would realize that translated beings are still mortal and will have to pass

through the experience of death, or the separation of the spirit and the body, although this will be instantaneous, for the people of the City of Enoch, Elijah, and others who received this great blessing in ancient times, before the coming of our Lord, could not have received the resurrection, or the change from mortality to immortality, because our Lord had not paid the debt which frees us from mortality and grants to us the resurrection and immortal life. Christ is the "resurrection and the life," and the "first fruits of them that slept," therefore none could pass from mortality to immortality until our Savior completed his work for the redemption of man and had gained the keys of the resurrection, being the first to rise having "life in himself" and the power to lay down his life and take it up again, thus freeing all men from the bondage which the fall had placed upon them.

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"There Are Some Standing Here . . ."

Question: *"In reading the New Testament I have come upon a passage of scripture that is not clear to me. I would like to have the answer. It is [Mark 9:1](#) and [Luke 9:27](#)."*

"When Christ said 'Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power,' of whom was he speaking, and when were they to see the kingdom of God, as he had the Church established on the earth at that time?"

Answer: The passage in Luke is similar to that in Mark: "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God." This prophecy is more plainly stated in Matthew, as follows:

Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. ([Matthew 16:28](#).)

It is true that the Church or kingdom of God was set up by our Savior in the days of his ministry; but it was not set up at that time in its power and glory. Moreover, the Savior knew that before the great day of his second coming, in power and glory, there would be a "falling away" and the Church would cease to be on the earth during those days of dark apostasy.

This prophecy is a problem that has disturbed the Christian world, for they are without a satisfactory explanation. Infidels have dwelt upon it in ridicule as a sign of the Savior's folly because nearly two millenniums have passed since these words were uttered. To the natural man it is impossible for anyone standing in the group to which the Savior spoke to live until now; therefore, to them his prediction has definitely failed.

To the members of the Church this prophecy holds no problem and is no mystery. In the closing verses of the gospel of John we find recorded an intimation that John, who was evidently in that group, would not die until the second coming at the beginning of the millennium. The Savior informed Peter how death would come to Him, and Peter seeing John standing near said,

Lord, and what shall this man do?

Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.

Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus saith not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?([John 21:21-23](#).)

TRADITIONS NOT BASED ON FACT

A tradition has come down from early times that John died a martyr like the other apostles, but this is not so. Several novels have been written, perhaps based on the promise to John, of a man cursed to live until Christ shall come because of some abuse given the Lord on his way to the crucifixion. It is possible that there were others as well as John who were given this great privilege who were present when this prophecy was given.

In the Doctrine and Covenants, Section Seven, we have a revelation declaring that John was blessed to tarry until the Lord shall come. When the Lord visited the Nephites, he chose twelve disciples and gave them presiding authority. Three of these disciples wished to remain until the Savior should return. They hesitated to tell him, but he read their thoughts and granted their petition. He said to them,

Behold, I know your thoughts, and ye have desired the thing which John, my beloved, who was with me in my ministry, before that I was lifted up by the Jews, desired of me.

Therefore, more blessed are ye, for ye shall never taste of death; but ye shall live to behold all the doings of the Father unto the children of men, even until all things shall be fulfilled according to the will of the Father, when I shall come in my glory with the powers of heaven.([3 Nephi 28:6-7](#).)

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The Marriages of Abraham, Joseph, and Moses to Egyptian Women

Question: *"It seems to be the general opinion in our group that Hagar, being an Egyptian, had Negro blood. I was of the opinion Abraham would not take a wife with Negro blood, and I thought the Egyptians were of the white race, but a member was present who stated that Ishmael could not hold the priesthood, and it was on account of Negro blood. There is also an account of Joseph and Moses marrying Egyptian women. It did not seem to affect their standing in the priesthood, and I thought they also must have been of the white race. Will you kindly straighten us on this matter?"*

Answer: If Abraham, Joseph, and Moses had married Negro wives their descendants would have been denied the priesthood according to the word of the Lord to Abraham.([Abraham 1:21-27](#).) Had such a thing happened the Lord would not have called Israel as a chosen people, neither would he have chosen the Prophet Joseph Smith and given him the keys of authority for the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times, as he was a descendant of Joseph and of Abraham.

For many years preceding the time of Abraham the descendants of Egyptus occupied and governed in Egypt. They extended their dominion into the land of Canaan and oppressed the people, but the time came when the people of Asia, who were of the Semitic race, rebelled and made war on the Egyptians

and conquered the country, driving the original inhabitants farther south and up the Nile. These Semitic people known as Hyksos, or shepherds, for they had many flocks and herds, were in possession of the land of Egypt for many years before the time of Abraham. Their rule lasted for some five hundred years, and they were in possession of the land when Joseph was taken into Egypt. It was a Hyksos king who befriended Joseph and who was friendly with Abraham and Isaac. While these people occupied the land of Egypt, they were called Egyptians, although they were relatives of Abraham and Joseph, being descendants of Shem, the condition being similar to the early settlers in the United States. Most of these settlers were English, but after the Revolutionary War they were known as Americans, and all who come to this land from England, Germany, Scandinavia, and other countries, who become citizens are called Americans.

A ROYAL LINEAGE

The wife of Joseph was Asenath, daughter of Potipherah, the high priest of On. Dr. A. H. Sayce, an English scholar and archaeologist, states that the name of this priest means "the gift of the sun-god," and the name Asenath probably is not Egyptian. He further says Egyptian law prevented the marriage of Joseph with the daughter of the king as "None but those of the royal blood of Egypt might marry one of the solar race. But the priestly head of the state religion ranked next to the Pharaoh, and in marrying his daughter, therefore, Joseph was taken into the very heart of the royal circle. It placed him at once on a footing of equality with the highest nobles of Egypt." (*Joseph and the Land of Egypt*, p. 62.)

So Abraham, Joseph, and Moses married women of their own race, and we need have no worry over our lineage, because we are of that same race.

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Is There a Contradiction between [Alma 7:10](#) and [Matthew 2:5-6](#)?

Question: "Will you kindly explain the contradiction between [Alma 7:10](#) and [Matthew 2:5-6](#)?"

Answer: There is no contradiction! [Alma 7:10](#), is as follows:

And behold, he shall be born of Mary, *at* Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers, she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed and conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God.

[Matthew 2:5-6](#) is,

And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

This question has in recent weeks come from several sources. It is from the promptings of enemies of the Church who spend their time in a futile endeavor to discredit the Book of Mormon, attempting to

make it the product of the mind of Joseph Smith the Prophet or some other person in collusion with him. These religious persons who sponsor this question may well be compared to the scribes and Pharisees of old, and the Savior's description of them, as recorded in Matthew, Chapter 23, fits these modern Pharisees and scribes admirably. They attempt to show that the Book of Mormon is of modern authorship, and this attempt has been going on for one hundred and twenty-five years and is farther away from effectiveness than in the beginning. It has utterly failed.

Joseph Smith and those associated with him when the Book of Mormon was translated knew perfectly well that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. If the Book of Mormon had been the production of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, or anyone else connected with this restoration, it would have stated plainly that Jesus was born *in* Bethlehem, for they were well aware of this fact. There has been an effort to make it appear that the Prophet was a very ignorant man who did not know where Jesus was born. In this they display their bitterness and hate and add to their confusion, for an ignorant man unacquainted with the fact of the birth of Jesus Christ *could not have written the Book of Mormon*. The fact that it is written in Alma as it is, indicates plainly that it is an expression coming from the Hebrew; for this is purely a Hebrew expression, in full accord with their manner of speech.

MODERN PHARISEES AND SCRIBES

Our members, instead of being influenced by these modern Pharisees and scribes, should understand that they fail to see in the Book of Mormon the clear exposition of the fundamental doctrines of the gospel; its incomparable clearness of the teaching of virtue; faith in Jesus Christ; admonitions of righteous living, condemnation of all evil; and the solemn testimonies of the writers that Jesus is the Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God. They treat with contempt the sacred testimonies of the witnesses, both those whose writings are within the book and those of this last dispensation. After all these years that the Book of Mormon has been before the public, all these critics can discover are a few manufactured contradictions that really do not exist.

There is no conflict or contradiction in the Book of Mormon with any truth recorded in the Bible. A careful reading of what Alma said will show that he had no intention of declaring that Jesus would be born *in* Jerusalem. Alma knew better. So did Joseph Smith and those who were associated with him in the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon. Had Alma said, "born *in* Jerusalem, the *city* of our fathers," it would have made all the difference in the world. Then we would have said he made an error. Alma made no mistake, and what he said is true.

Dr. Hugh Nibley, in his course of study for the priesthood for 1957, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, in Lesson 8, page 85, has this to say on this point:

. . . One of the favorite points of attack on the Book of Mormon has been the statement in [Alma 7:10](#) that the Savior would be born "at Jerusalem which is the *land* of our forefathers." Here Jerusalem is not the city "*in* the land of *our* forefathers," it *is* the land. Christ was born in a village some six miles from the city of Jerusalem; it was not in the city, but it was in what we now know the ancients themselves designated as "the land of Jerusalem." Such a neat test of authenticity is not often found in ancient documents.

If the same tactics used by these modern Pharisees, "blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow camels," were leveled at the Bible—and by some it has been done—far more serious problems would be presented for reconciliation. For one example we present [Matthew 8:28-33](#) and [Mark 5:1-16](#), the question whether it was the healing of *one* or *two* possessed with devils, in the land of the Gergesenes [Gadarenes]. Both Matthew and Mark are speaking of the same event. This discrepancy does not cause anyone who believes to discard his Bible.

A DICTIONARY DEFINITION

Well, let us go back to the words of Alma. He did not say that the Lord would be born *in* Jerusalem. The preposition "at" has several meanings. The *Standard Dictionary* lists the following:

Of a point in space; on; upon; close to; by; near; within. . . . When we think merely of the local or geographical point, we use at; when we think of inclusive space, we employ in.

Alma was thinking of a geographical point, therefore he spoke properly according to the usage of language even in our own day when he said, "at Jerusalem, the land of our forefathers," Jerusalem being the central point of the land of their fathers. In the Book of Acts([Acts 20:15](#).) it is written:

And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived *at* Samos, and tarried *at* Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus.

It seems perfectly clear in this passage that when they arrived at Trogyllium they were not in the city, but remained in the boat. Since the men on the boat, including Paul, were prisoners, it would have been folly to have taken them off the boat and into the city.

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Satan's Power to Perform Miracles

Question: "Does Satan have power to perform miracles? The question arises out of the fact that a preacher is apparently performing healings and demonstrating his power (by television and radio), thus advertising his meetings and the work he is doing. There are some actions and expressions which he uses that impress me and some others that his work does not come from the Lord. We feel that they do not harmonize with the teachings of our Savior. He seems to represent no church but invites his hearers to join some church and attend their meetings. We have no solution to this problem, can you help us?"

Answer: All down through the ages and in almost all countries, men have exercised great occult and mystical powers, even to the healing of the sick and the performing of miracles. Soothsayers, magicians, and astrologers were found in the courts of ancient kings. They had certain powers by which they divined and solved the monarch's problems, dreams, etc. One of the most striking examples of this is recorded in Exodus, where Pharaoh called "the wise men and the sorcerers" who duplicated some of the miracles the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron to perform. When Aaron threw down his rod, it became a serpent. The Egyptian magicians threw down their rods, and they also became serpents. When Aaron stretched his rod over the river, it became like blood, and the fish died. "And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments:" and when Aaron stretched forth his rod over the streams, the rivers and ponds, there came forth frogs that covered the land. "And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt."(Exodus, chapters 7-8.) Beyond this point the magicians of Egypt could not go. The magicians failed in the days of Joseph to interpret the dream of Pharaoh because it was a dream from the Lord, but Joseph, because he held the priesthood, interpreted it. Likewise in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar of the image, the astrologers failed to give the interpretation because the dream came from the Lord, and Daniel, who held the priesthood gave the interpretation. Even to this day the magicians of India perform many wonderful works.

SATAN HAS GREAT POWER

There is no doubt about Satan having great power and that he can appear as an angel of light. In this form he appeared on the banks of the Susquehanna River to oppose the restoration of keys, and was detected by Michael, and his plans were thwarted. (See [D. & C. 128:20](#). Compare also Section 129:8.) Jacob, son of Lehi, in his teachings, stated that if there had been no atonement, our spirits ". . . must have become like unto him [Satan], and we become devils, angels to a devil, to be shut out from the presence of our God, and to remain with the father of lies, in misery, like unto himself; yea, to that being who beguiled our first parents, who transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light, and stirreth up the children of men unto secret combinations of murder and all manner of secret works of darkness." ([2 Nephi 9:9](#).)

Korihor, who tried to deceive the Nephites, admitted that Satan appeared to him as an angel and told him what to teach the people. ([Alma 30:53](#).)

When the Prophet Joseph Smith and a company of brethren were journeying to Kirtland from Missouri, they camped at McIlwaine's Bend on the Missouri River. There Elder William W. Phelps "in open vision by daylight, saw the destroyer in his most horrible power, ride upon the face of the waters; others heard the noise, but saw not the vision." (*D.H.C.*, Vol. 1, p. 203.) The Savior declared that Satan had the power to bind bodies of men and women and sorely afflict them. ([Matthew 7:22-23](#); [Luke 13:16](#).) If Satan has power to bind the bodies, he surely must have power to loose them. It should be remembered that Satan has great knowledge and thereby can exercise authority and to some extent control the elements, when some greater power does not intervene. Paul, writing to the Ephesian Saints called Satan "The prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." ([Ephesians 2:2](#).)

TRUE PROPHETS HAVE CLEAR DOCTRINES

When a man comes in the name of the Lord healing the sick and performing mighty works, he will not come with the blare of trumpets, nor will he advertise his performance. Moreover, he will not teach an indefinite doctrine. He will not tell the people to join a church—any church; but he will proclaim a clear doctrine of repentance and baptism for the remission of sins and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. When one comes preaching his own doctrine, and though he may perform miracles, if he does all of this to be seen of men and by advertising his deeds to the world, it is a sure sign that he has not been called by divine appointment. On numerous occasions when the Savior healed the sick and gave eyesight to the blind, he admonished them, saying, "See that no man know it."—"And charged them that they should not make him known." Such admonition can be found in the following passages: [Matt. 9:30](#); [12:9-16](#); [Mark 3:10-12](#); [7:32-36](#); [8:22-26](#).

In this dispensation the Lord instructed the elders of the Church that as they went forth in humility and faith, they should *in his name* "do many wonderful works; cast out devils, heal the sick, open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, and cause the dumb to speak," but he also said:

"A commandment I give unto them, that they shall not boast themselves of these things, neither speak them before the world; for these things are given unto you for your profit and for salvation." ([D. & C. 84:66-73](#).)

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The Doctrine of Blood Atonement

Question: *"Will you kindly explain the meaning of the doctrine of blood atonement and the stand of the Church in relation to capital punishment?"*

Answer: The doctrine of blood atonement has reference to the great sacrifice made by Jesus Christ in the shedding of his blood upon the cross. Through that sacrifice the power of death was destroyed, and all mankind receive the blessing of restoration to immortality that they can die no more. When Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden he was immortal and could have lived forever; likewise all things that had been created as well as Adam and Eve ". . . must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end." ([2 Nephi 2:22](#).) Had that kind of existence continued, Adam and Eve could not have fulfilled the first great commandment given them in the garden—to multiply and fill the earth with their posterity, ([Genesis 1:28](#); [2 Nephi 2:23-25](#).) and the great plan of salvation voted upon and accepted in the world of spirits, before the earth was formed, would have failed. ([Moses 4:1-4](#); [Abraham 3:22-28](#).)

When in the garden Adam and Eve were granted the privilege of partaking of the fruit of all the trees except the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They were instructed that if they ate of that tree they should surely die, and their state of immortality would come to an end, and the mortal existence would be ushered in with all its pains, sorrows, sins and pleasures, which we find in the earth today; and they would be forced to live by the sweat of the face. Moreover, this death would bring, not only the separation of spirit and body, but also banishment from the presence of God which is the second death. This commandment they broke, and the fall was introduced bringing blood as the life-giving substance to their mortal bodies, which previously were quickened by Spirit. It is difficult to imagine a worse fate than this which befell Adam and Eve and which was inherited by all mankind. Jacob, son of Lehi, has painted this awful picture in these vivid words:

THE WISDOM OF GOD

O the wisdom of God, his mercy and grace! For behold, if the flesh should rise no more our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell from before the presence of the Eternal God, and became the devil, to rise no more.

And our spirits must have become like unto him, and we become devils, angels to a devil, to be shut out from the presence of our God, and to remain with the father of lies, in misery, like unto himself, yea, to that being who beguiled our first parents, who transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light, and stirreth up the children of men unto secret combinations of murder and all manner of secret works of darkness. ([2 Nephi 9:8-9](#).)

It was never intended that this terrible fate should be the end of man. He was not sent to this earth to pass through mortal probation to suffer the ills of the flesh, be tempted, tried, and then consigned to eternal damnation, losing his physical body which was given him as the tabernacle for his eternal spirit, and to be joined to that spirit through all eternity. Justice demanded that this broken law, which deprived him of this eternal existence, must be repaired; mercy also was equally as insistent that this restoration should be made. The fall of Adam and Eve was foreknown, and preparation for this restoration had been made long before they had been placed on this earth. In the grand council held in heaven, Jesus Christ voluntarily accepted the mission of Redeemer, to come in the due time of the Father and make the sacrifice that would bring to pass this restoration through the shedding of his blood. He is spoken of in the scriptures as the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." ([Revelation 13:8](#); [1 Peter 1:19-20](#).) Adam was also chosen in this same council to fulfil his part as the progenitor of the human race. When

he came to fulfil his part of the plan, all his former knowledge was taken from him. He had forgotten that he was Michael the archangel, holding great authority in the pre-existence. When the truth was fully revealed to Adam and Eve, and they learned that Jesus Christ had been chosen to be their Redeemer, and also of their posterity, they rejoiced, and Eve said:

Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient. ([Moses 5:11](#).)

TWOFOLD BENEFITS OF THE ATONEMENT

The atonement of our Savior is twofold in its benefits to mankind through the shedding of his blood. First, all mankind are redeemed from death and will receive the resurrection. This is the free gift of God. Second, it gives to all those who will repent of all their sins, redemption from their sins if they will accept and obey his gospel and endure to the end.

Here is a quotation from Elder Orson Pratt:

The universal redemption of the posterity of Adam from the fall will be fully accomplished after the earth has been filled with its measure of inhabitants, and all men have been redeemed from the grave to immortality, and the earth itself has been changed and made entirely new.

But a universal redemption from the effects of original sin has nothing to do with redemption from our personal sins; for the original sin of Adam, and the personal sins of his children, are two different things. The first was committed by man in his immortal state; the second was committed by man in a mortal state: the former was committed in a state of ignorance of good or evil; the latter was committed by man, having a knowledge of both good and evil. As the sins are different, and committed entirely under different circumstances, so the penalties are different also. The penalty of the first transgression was an eternal separation of body and spirit, and eternal banishment from the presence of Jehovah; while the penalty of our own transgressions does not involve a disunion of body and spirit, but only eternal banishment. The first penalty not only shut man out from the presence of God, but deprived him eternally of a body; the second penalty permits him to retain his body, though in a banished condition. As the penalties are different, so also is the redemption. Redemption from the first penalty is unconditional on the part of man: redemption from the second penalty is conditional. Unconditional redemption is universal; it takes within its scope all mankind; it is as unlimited as the fall; it redeems men from all its effects; it restored to them their bodies. . . .

The children of Adam had no agency in the transgression of their first parents, and therefore they are not required to exercise any agency in their redemption from its penalty: They are redeemed from it without faith, repentance, baptism, or any other act, either of mind or body.

Conditional redemption is also universal in its nature; it is offered to all, but not received by all: it is a universal gift, though not universally accepted: Its benefits can be obtained only through faith, repentance, baptism, the laying on of hands, and obedience to all other requirements of the gospel.

Unconditional redemption is a gift forced upon mankind which they cannot reject, though they were disposed. Not so with conditional redemption; it can be received or rejected according to the will of the creature.

Redemption from the original sin is without faith or works: redemption from our own sins is given through faith and works. Both are gifts of free grace; but while one is a gift forced upon us unconditionally, the other is a gift merely offered to us conditionally. The reception of the one is

compulsory; the reception of the other is voluntary. Man cannot, by any possible act, prevent his redemption from the fall, but he can utterly refuse and prevent his redemption from the penalty of his own sins.

The earth, like the posterity of Adam, was cursed because of the original sin, and like them, it will be redeemed unconditionally, and restored again unto the presence of God. So far as the original sin is concerned, mankind and the earth keep pace with each other. When one falls the other falls also. When one is redeemed, the other is redeemed also.

Had there been no other sin but that of Adam's, the redeemed earth would have become the eternal abode of all the posterity of Adam without one exception. But both man and the earth have been still further corrupted by other sins. The posterity of Adam have transgressed the code of laws given since the fall, and subjected themselves to its penalty. This penalty does not interfere with the first penalty. Man will be redeemed from the first before the second will be fully inflicted. When his redemption from the first is complete, then comes the judgment, when his own sins will be enquired into, and not Adam's. As he stands before the judgment seat, he will find himself entirely innocent of Adam's transgression, and entirely redeemed from the effects of it, but he still finds himself guilty of his own individual sins, the penalty of which is a second death, not a dissolution of body and spirit like that of the first death, but a banishment from the presence of God, and from the glory of his power.

Redemption from the second death, as we have already observed, is conditional. Man having voluntarily committed sin, must voluntarily comply with the conditions of redemption; otherwise he must suffer the penalty. If any should feel disposed to doubt whether the second penalty will be inflicted, let them look at the infliction of the first, during the past 6,000 years. The first death with all its attendant evils has extended its ravages among all nations and generations since the first law was broken. If God, then has fulfilled his word in the first provocation to the very letter, why should any one suppose that he will not inflict the penalty of the second provocation? (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 12, pp. 69-70.)

Paul also taught this doctrine. He said to the Corinthian members of the Church:

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.

For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. ([1 Corinthians 15:19-22](#).)

THE SAVIOR IS OUR BEST AUTHORITY

The best authority that we have on the effects of the atonement reaching all mankind is Jesus Christ himself. To the Jews he said, when speaking of his missions:

. . . The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself:

And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice.

And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. ([John 5:25-29.](#))

Of this universal resurrection through the atonement of Jesus Christ, all the ancient prophets have spoken. In the Book of Mormon we find one of the clearest utterances on this subject by Amulek, when preaching to the people of Ammonihah:

Therefore the wicked remain as though there had been no redemption made, except it be the loosing of the bands of death; for behold, the day cometh that all shall rise from the dead and stand before God, and be judged according to their works.

Now, there is a death which is called a temporal death; and the death of Christ shall loose the bands of this temporal death, that all shall be raised from this temporal death.

The spirit and the body shall be reunited again in its perfect form; both limb and joint shall be restored to its proper frame, even as we now are at this time; and we shall be brought to stand before God, knowing even as we know now, and have a bright recollection of all our guilt.

Now, this restoration shall come to all, both old and young, both bond and free, both male and female, both the wicked and the righteous; and even there shall not so much as a hair of their heads be lost; but every thing shall be restored to its perfect frame, as it is now, or in the body, and shall be brought and be arraigned before the bar of Christ the Son, and God the Father, and the Holy Spirit, which is one Eternal God, to be judged according to their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil.

Now, behold, I have spoken unto you concerning the death of the mortal body, and also concerning the resurrection of the mortal body. I say unto you that this mortal body is raised to an immortal body, that is from death, even from the first death unto life, that they can die no more; their spirits uniting with their bodies, never to be divided; thus the whole becoming spiritual and immortal, that they can no more see corruption. ([Alma 11:41-45.](#))

JESUS HAD POWER TO LAY DOWN HIS LIFE

Jesus is the only Person born into this world that ever had the power to lay down his life and take it again. He said:

I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

As the Father knoweth me even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again.

No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. ([John 10:14-18.](#))

Again he said:

For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. (Ibid., 5:20-21.)

Jesus had the power to lay down his life and take it again because he is the Only Begotten Son of God in the flesh, and from his Eternal Father he obtained life including the power over death. From his mother, a descendant of Adam, he obtained his blood and the power to die. It was essential that the mortal blood, with the seeds of death, should be given back, and that could only be accomplished by an infinite atonement. By infinite atonement we mean an atonement made by one who was infinite or eternal. Therefore it had to be by a Son begotten by the Father; and to accomplish this end Jesus Christ was born into the world.

REDEEMED THROUGH SHEDDING OF BLOOD

Our Savior could not have atoned for Adam's transgression or redeemed mankind from death, except by the shedding of his blood. Neither could we, the children of Adam, be redeemed except through the blood of Jesus Christ. This is clearly stated in the blessing of the sacrament and many other passages of scripture. Justice would have demanded that the atonement for "original sin," that of Adam, should have been atoned for by Adam, and that the individual sins of each of us should be atoned for by our own blood; but to take Adam's blood or our blood as a sacrifice would have been futile. We still would have remained subject to death as we have no power to redeem ourselves. Therefore Jesus volunteered to redeem us because he was not under the curse.

Paul has said, writing to the Hebrews:

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. ([Hebrews 9:22](#).)

All the sacrifices of old, from the days of Adam to the atonement of Jesus Christ by blood were in the similitude of and a reminder of the great sacrifice, and pointed forward to its fulfilment by Jesus upon the cross.

The Lord instructed Israel that they were not to eat blood:

And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh the atonement for the soul.

Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.

And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust.

For it is the life of the flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat of the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off. ([Leviticus 17:10-14](#).)

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

It has been the law of the Lord from the beginning that

. . . flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.

Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.
([Genesis 9:4-6](#).)

Moreover, Moses reiterated this commandment to Israel as the Lord commanded him, and it has never by divine decree been revoked. The Nephites taught and practiced it. ([2 Nephi 9:35](#); [Alma 42:19](#).) In this, the last dispensation, the Lord has confirmed this penalty upon those who deliberately kill.

President Charles W. Penrose, speaking of capital punishment, has said:

This divine law for shedding the blood of a murderer has never been repealed. It is a law given by the Almighty and not abrogated in the Christian faith. It stands on record for all time—that a murderer shall have his blood shed. He that commits murder must be slain. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." I know there are some benevolent and philanthropic people in these times who think that capital punishment ought to be abolished. Yet I think the Lord knows better than they. The law he ordained will have the best results to mankind in general. (Penrose, Charles W., *Blood Atonement*, pp. 25-26.)

President Penrose then continues:

Well, is there any other sin that a man may commit which is worthy of death? I think there is. I will refer you to one in the Book of Leviticus, 20th chapter and 10th verse.

"And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death."

That was the law of God in the days of Moses. It was the law of God previous to the days of Moses, as you will find by reference to the Book of Genesis. It has been the law of God from the beginning. Some people have an idea that Jesus did away with that law, and they bring up the case of the woman that had been taken in transgression. The object of the Pharisees in bringing the woman to the Savior was that they might catch him in some way. You will find by reading the history of Jesus Christ's ministry on the earth that it was then as it is today—snares are all the time being laid to catch the servants of God. They tried to entrap him in many ways, but he was able to meet them with the wisdom of the Great God; for the Spirit of God was given to him without measure. The woman they brought to him was taken in this great transgression. The Pharisees knew the law of Moses was that she should be put to death. They inquired what Jesus had to say. He stooped down and thought a little while, then wrote with his finger on the ground and exclaimed, "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone. . . ." Did Jesus say the law ought not to be inflicted? No, He asked: "Woman, where are thine accusers?" They were gone. "Neither do I accuse thee." It must be remembered that there must be accusers as well as judges. Jesus set a pattern which judges in these times would do well to follow. He did not act as an attorney for the prosecution or as a witness against the accused as well as a judge to pronounce the sentence. . . . (Ibid., pp. 26-27.)

And now, behold, I speak unto the church. Thou shalt not kill; and he that kills shall not have forgiveness in this world, nor in the world to come.

And, again, I say, Thou shalt not kill; but he that killeth shall die. ([D. & C. 42:18-19.](#))

Is it the prerogative of the Church to inflict the punishment? No! The Lord has given commandment that all offenses worthy of death shall be handled by the courts of the land as declared in the Doctrine and Covenants, "And it shall come to pass, that if any persons among you shall kill they shall be delivered up and dealt with according to the laws of the land; for remember that he hath no forgiveness; and it shall be proved according to the laws of the land." (*Ibid.*, 42:79.)

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Card Playing and Games of Chance

Question: *"For some time I have had a very serious question on my mind. It is in regard to the playing of card games. Is it a sin to play cards or join card clubs? I am a returned missionary and have thought that there was nothing but evil coming from playing card games and joining card clubs. Some of my friends think I am very foolish in holding such a belief, but still I do not wish to join them in doing such a thing if it is considered wrong and not approved by the Church."*

Nothing good comes out of card games or games of chance. There are numerous ways in which we may obtain wholesome amusement and recreation which is beneficial to both body and mind. In games where cards are used usually "stakes" are played for, and betting is done. Someone will obtain the "stakes," but no one really wins, for the one who obtains the "stakes" has lost part of his manhood which is difficult to regain. There seems to be an urge in human nature which leads many men and women to seek to obtain something for nothing, and many have risked their hard-earned substance on the altar of chance, hoping to win a fortune which they have not earned. There is a lure in all games of chance which Satan places before them, and in their greed or selfish desire for gain they take the uncertain bait far less innocently than does a fish which grabs the angler's hook.

The regular standard playing cards are used in gambling games. They are found in questionable resorts and gambling dens. Young people who have learned to play the games in their own homes or at card clubs with innocent intent too frequently are lured into questionable places where gambling prevails. Such games of chance are usually associated with cigarettes and beer and those who indulge in cards acquire also the tobacco and drinking evils. Card playing becomes a habit just as much as smoking and drinking. I remember a neighbor of mine who in his earlier days was addicted to gambling. Later in his life he repented and joined the Church. One day before a group of which I was a member, he emphatically impressed upon our minds the fact that gambling is a disease which fastens itself upon those who indulge so tenaciously that they seldom quit. Its influence upon character is just the same as the use of tobacco and strong drink. He advised all to shun all card playing and games of chance lest the habit would destroy them.

DISCOURTEAGED BY AUTHORITIES

Card playing and all other games of chance should be avoided as the gate of destruction. All such practices have been discountenanced by the Authorities of the Church from the beginning of our history. When the Mormon Battalion was called into the service of the country, President Brigham Young addressed the volunteers and said that he wished them to prove themselves to be the best soldiers

in the service of the United States. He admonished the captains to be fathers to the men in their companies and to manage the officers and men by the power of the priesthood. They should keep themselves clean, teach chastity and gentility. There was to be no swearing, and no man was to be insulted. They were to avoid contention with Missourians—their enemies—and all other persons. They were to take their Bibles and copies of the Book of Mormon with them and study them but not impose their beliefs on others. They were to avoid card playing, and if they had cards with them, they were to burn them. If they would follow this instruction, he promised them that they would not be called on to shed the blood of their fellow men.

President Joseph F. Smith has given this wholesome advice:

While a simple game of cards in itself may be harmless, it is a fact that by immoderate repetition it ends in an infatuation for chance schemes, in habits of excess, in waste of precious time, in dulling and stupor of the mind, and in the complete destruction of religious feeling. These are serious results, evils that should and must be avoided by the Latter-day Saints. Then again, there is a grave danger that lurks in persistent card playing, which begets the spirit of gambling, of speculation and what awakens the dangerous desire to get something for nothing. (*Gospel Doctrine*, p. 412.)

Card playing is an excessive pleasure; it is intoxicating, and therefore, in the nature of a vice. It is naturally the companion of the cigarette and the wine glass, and the latter leads to the poolroom and the gambling hall. Few men and women indulge in the dangerous pastime of the card table without compromising their business affairs and the higher responsibilities of life. Tell me what amusements you like best and whether your amusements have been a ruling passion in your life, and I will tell you what you are. Few indulge frequently in card playing in whose lives it does not become a ruling passion. (*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 38, p. 529.)

The Lord said:

A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. ([Matthew 12:35-37](#).)

This being true of words that are idle, may we not say that idle acts spent in evil practices will merit the same reward?

THE LORD APPROVES WHOLESOME ENTERTAINMENT

This does not mean that the Lord frowns on innocent amusement and the time spent in wholesome games. The human body needs relaxation, and this can be obtained in a legitimate way. For this purpose in part the Mutual Improvement Associations have been organized where proper forms of amusement and entertainment may be taught, and thereby the body strengthened and the mind quickened and developed. In one of the darkest hours in the history of the Church, when the weary members were crossing the plains having been driven from their homes, the Lord through President Brigham Young said to them:

If thou art merry, praise the Lord with singing, with music, with dancing, and with a prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

If thou are sorrowful, call on the Lord thy God with supplication, that your souls may be joyful.([D. & C. 136: 28-29.](#))

The Prophet Joseph Smith engaged in manly sports on the few occasions that came to him. President Brigham Young and his brethren built the Salt Lake Theatre and the Social Hall. The drama, the dance, and other entertainments were given to the members of the Church, and by this means they were edified and strengthened; all such entertainments were opened and closed with prayer. The auxiliary organizations encourage athletic contests and sports under proper supervision and regulations. Our people are encouraged, not curtailed, in every kind of needful recreation and amusement; but all things which the world seeks, leading to evil, such as card playing, raffling, and indulging in playing machines of chance, are frowned upon as destructive of morals and abiding faith in that which is just and true.

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The Word of Wisdom

Question: *"Will you please tell me if the Word of Wisdom has ever been presented to the Church as a commandment making its observation obligatory upon the members of the Church?"*

Answer: This question is one of a score that have been received in relation to the Word of Wisdom. Some of the questions are due to misunderstanding and others, apparently, seeking answers that will justify a violation or modification of the provisions enumerated in the revelation. The simple answer to this question is yes, such commandment has been given and repeated on several occasions. September 9, 1851, President Brigham Young stated that the members of the Church had had sufficient time to be taught the import of this revelation and that henceforth it was to be considered a divine commandment. This was first put to vote before the female members of the congregation and then before the men and by unanimous vote accepted. President Joseph F. Smith at a conference meeting in October 1908, made the same statement, and this has been repeated from time to time.

It is true that when it was first revealed it was not given as a commandment made mandatory upon the members as the commandments of the Decalogue are. Nevertheless the meaning is clear, so that no member with sincere desire to do the will of the Lord will think of wilfully violating the counsel it contains. During the first few years after the organization of the Church, converts came out of the world who saw nothing wrong in the use of tobacco and the drinking of wine, and in some instances even stronger alcoholic beverages. To correct this evil, which reason teaches us is harmful to the body, and to cleanse the Church of such habits, the Lord gave this Word of Wisdom. No matter how we may look at it, the intent is clear that it should be faithfully observed. To answer all the questions which have been asked dealing with its instruction would require a volume of considerable size. Let us rather consider the purpose for which it was given:

To be sent greeting; not by commandment or constraint, but by revelation and the word of wisdom, showing forth the order and will of God in the temporal salvation of all saints in the last days—

Given for a principle with promise, adapted to the capacity of the weak and the weakest of all saints, who are or can be called saints (D. & C. 89:2-3.)

THE LORD'S WILL SHOULD BE OBSERVED

It seems to most members of the Church that all the Lord needs to say is that it is his will that this revelation should be observed and kept. It is written:

For behold, it is not meet that I should command in all things; for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant; wherefore he receiveth no reward. (*Ibid.*, 58:26.)

Among other questions received we find such as this: "Why does not the Lord give us further revelation to cover the many other stimulants and drinks and the proper foods for the body?" The answer is because such revelation is unnecessary. The Word of Wisdom is a basic law. It points the way and gives us ample instruction in regard to both food and drink, good for the body and also detrimental. If we sincerely follow what is written with the aid of the Spirit of the Lord, we need no further counsel. This wonderful instruction contains the following promise:

And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones;

And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint. (*Ibid.*, 89:18-20.)

Thus by keeping the commandment we are promised inspiration and the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord through which we will know what is good and what is bad for the body, without the Lord's presenting us with a detailed list separating the good things from the bad that we may be protected. We will learn by this faithful observance that the promises of the Lord are fulfilled. We will learn more nearly the value of our mortal bodies. They have been given us as eternal tabernacles for our spirits. Each soul (i.e., spirit and body combined) in the resurrection will be joined inseparably, never again to be divided. We will have our own identity as distinctly as we do now, for as Amulek said:

The spirit and the body shall be reunited again in its perfect form; both limb and joint shall be restored to its proper frame, even as we now are at this time; and we shall be brought to stand before God, knowing even as we know now, and have a bright recollection of all our guilt. . . .

Now, behold, I have spoken unto you concerning the death of the mortal body, and also concerning the resurrection of the mortal body. I say unto you that this mortal body is raised to an immortal body, that is from death, even from the first death unto life, that they can die no more; their spirits uniting with their bodies, never to be divided; thus the whole becoming spiritual and immortal, that they can no more see corruption. ([Alma 11:43](#), [45](#).)

THOSE WHO LOVE THE LORD WILL OBEY

In the resurrection we are to receive rewards according to our individual works, and it is written that they who are filthy in this life will, in that life, be filthy still. ([Revelation 22:11](#); [Alma 41:14-15](#).) Therefore if we love the truth, we should delight in doing those things which the Lord would have us do.

One passage in this revelation ([D. & C. 89:4](#).) is quite generally overlooked. It states that the time should come when wicked and designing men would resort to practices of adulteration of foods and drinks in order to get gain, to the injury of the health of their victims. How true these words have been. So evil have these practices become that the government was forced to enact pure food and drug laws for the protection of the people. Notwithstanding these wholesome laws, still evil practices are going on

contrary to the law, and harmful drugs are smuggled into the county bringing misery and death to thousands.

There are many ways in which we may break the Word of Wisdom. We break it when we eat more than is needful, even of wholesome foods. We have been commanded to do all things in moderation, "with judgment, not to excess, neither by extortion." (*Ibid.*, 59:20.) The Lord has not condemned the use of white flour, nor white granulated sugar. There are some among us who cannot eat whole wheat bread and the coarser foods because of peculiar physical conditions. If white sugar were to be condemned, then the Lord would not have revealed to President Wilford Woodruff the need of building a sugar factory. Some persons are allergic to one thing and others to another, yet what they cannot take are wholesome to others. Any perfect food that is good for the body, can be harmful by over-indulgence. According to the promise of the Lord we will have wisdom to understand these things by virtue of faithful observance of this basic law—the Word of Wisdom.

A safe guide to each and all is this: If in doubt as to any food or drink, whether it is good or harmful, let it alone until you have learned the truth in regard to it. If anything offered is habit-forming, we will be safe in concluding that it contains some ingredients that are harmful to the body and should be avoided.

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The Divine law of Witnesses

Question: *"If the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated were returned and brought to light to be examined, would it not be easier to convert the balance of the world to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?"*

Answer: Questions of this nature frequently are asked. Many tourists who visit the temple grounds ask why the plates of the Book of Mormon were returned to the angel, and they say, "If they were placed in some museum or archive for the deposit of rare manuscripts and could be examined by scholars, the testimony from such a source would convert the whole world." When they are informed that a large portion of the plates was sealed and the Lord would not permit them to be translated at this time because the world is not prepared to receive what is written, the questioner turns away with knowing wink or incredulous smile, feeling that he has struck a vital blow against the truth of the story of the Book of Mormon. The simple fact is, however, that the ways and thoughts of the Lord are not the ways and thoughts of men. ([Isaiah 55:8-9](#).) ([Isaiah 55:8-9](#).)

It is made very clear in the Book of Mormon that it comes to the world with sufficient witnesses. The records on the plates are sacred; a large part of them have not been revealed because even the members of the Church are not prepared to receive what is written. Then again, the plan of the Lord is to reveal his word by the mouth of chosen witnesses. He had Nephi write regarding the publishing of the Book of Mormon that he, the Lord, would raise up three special witnesses, who would behold the plates by the power of God.

Wherefore, at that day when the book shall be delivered unto the man of whom I have spoken, the book shall be hid from the eyes of the world, that the eyes of none shall behold it save it be that three witnesses shall behold it, by the power of God, besides him to whom the book shall be delivered; and

they shall testify to the truth of the book and the things therein.

And there is none other which shall view it, save it be a few according to the will of God, to bear testimony of his word unto the children of men; for the Lord God hath said that the works of the faithful should speak as if it were from the dead.

Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to bring forth the words of the book; and in the mouth of as many witnesses as seemeth him good will he establish his word; and wo be unto him that rejecteth the word of God!([2 Nephi 27:12-14.](#))

HEARTS OF PEOPLE WERE NOT SUSCEPTIBLE TO TRUTH

Joseph Smith was forbidden to break the seals of the portion of the plates which contain the prophecies of the brother of Jared([Ether 5.](#)) because the hearts of the people were not susceptible to the divine truth which the record contained. Therefore this portion of the record was to remain sealed—

For the Lord said unto me: They shall not go forth unto the Gentiles until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord.

And in that day that they shall exercise faith in me, saith the Lord, even as the brother of Jared did, that they may become sanctified in me, then will I manifest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations, saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are.(*Ibid.*, 4:6-7.)

The Lord could not place in the hands of ungodly men a sacred record which contains information far in advance of the thinking of a critical and unbelieving world. Moreover, we are informed that the Book of Mormon as it has come to us, contains the "lesser part of the things which he [Jesus] taught the people," and Mormon wrote:

. . . I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken.

And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them.

And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation.

Behold, I was about to write them, all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbade it, saying: I will try the faith of my people.

Therefore I, Mormon, do write the things which have been commanded me of the Lord. And now I, Mormon, make an end of my sayings, and proceed to write the things which have been commanded me. ([3 Nephi 26:8-12.](#))

THE LAW OF WITNESSES IN ANCIENT ISRAEL

The law given to Israel in the beginning was that in the mouth of two or three witnesses all things should be established. The Jews called Jesus in question, basing their accusation against him on this law:

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.

And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. ([John 8:12-19](#).)

Here the Savior calls attention to the divine law of witnesses. On innumerable occasions had he demonstrated that he is the Son of God and the Redeemer of the world. On many occasions his Father also bore witness that he is the Only Begotten Son of God: once at the baptism of Jesus, again to the three apostles on the Mount of Transfiguration, and once again in the presence of a group when the Lord prayed to his Father. ([Matthew 17:1-13](#); [Mark 9:2-13](#); [Luke 9:28-36](#).) Then also the Father testified for him at the time of his birth by a glorious opening of the heavens when angels sang and a new star appeared.

The Lord speaks through his appointed witnesses upon whom he has bestowed divine power, not by granting documents to be tested by unbelieving men. No doubt, to many of those who do not understand the way of the Lord, it seems to be a very plausible and understandable argument to say: "How easy it would be for you to prove to the world the truth of the Book of Mormon by submitting the plates for expert examination! If they should find these plates to be genuine, their testimony would help you to convince the world."

TANGIBLE SIGNS DO NOT CONVERT

This, however, is the argument of fools. What would the result be *if* the plates had been placed in the hands of linguistic experts? They would have quarreled and contended among themselves. Then, how could the Lord place in their hands records which are withheld from the world because of the hardness of their hearts and their unbelief? The things of the kingdom of God which are so marvelous, as are these records which are sealed, would not be understood and hence would not be believed. If only pure minds could understand them, how could the impure eyes of the scholarly critics understand them? By such critics they would be condemned because they were written in a language that was "sealed" and which no man can read until the Lord gives to him in his own due time the power to break the seal. If they were to be passed on by the scholars, they could not value them, and even members of the Church would reject them. Too many members of the Church today, to say nothing of those who are not members, fail to heed these "lesser things" which have been given to try our faith. ([3 Nephi 26:7-12](#).)

Why do not these critics who demand that the plates of the Book of Mormon be brought forth for critical examination raise their voices in condemnation of our Lord because after his resurrection he appeared only to his disciples and not to the world? The logic of their contention should be that Jesus after his resurrection should have appeared, first, to Pilate, and he should have said: "Here I am;

examine the wounds in my hands and feet and side. Did I not tell you that I was the Son of God and that I would rise again?" Why did he not go to the assembled Sanhedrin and there appear before the high priest and that august body and say to them: "You scourged me, spat upon me, and delivered me to be crucified because I told you I would live again. Now see that what I said is come true!" This he did not do! But he appeared to his disciples—a few humble fishermen and a few women who believed on him.

This smirking remark implying that Joseph Smith did not have the plates because he did not display them to the world and permit conceited scholars to examine them, does not come from the mouths of wise, intelligent men. Yes! How easy it would be for the Lord to send forth his host of angels crying in heaven to all mankind, calling on them to accept his gospel. How much suffering it would relieve! How many days and years of toil it would save his mortal advocates and messengers.

If he would preach his gospel in this way whom would it save? Men are to walk by faith in humility, seeking from the Lord the knowledge of the gospel which saves. The Lord declares his word through his chosen witnesses, and woe to those who fight his truth and put his work to open shame.

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"Multiply and Replenish"

Question: *"When I served as a stake missionary a woman whom we interviewed said when the Lord spoke to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden he commanded them to 'Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.' 'Therefore,' she said, 'there must have been people on the earth before Adam and Eve, or they could not replenish it.' The dictionary seems to confirm this view. How can we answer her?"*

It is true that the original meaning of the word *replenish* connotes something is being filled again that was once filled before: *Re*—again, *plenus*—full. Why the translators of the King James Version of the Bible used the word *replenish* may not be clearly known, but it is not the word used in other translations and is not the correct meaning of the Hebrew word from which the translation was originally taken. It is true that the Prophet Joseph Smith followed the King James Version in the use of this word, perhaps because it had obtained common usage among the English-speaking peoples. *Replenish*, however, is incorrectly used in the King James translation. The Hebrew verb is *Mole* () meaning fill, to fill, or make full. (Hebrew Lexicon by Joshua W. Gibbs, A.M., p.120.) This word *Mole* is the same word which is translated fill in [Genesis 1:22](#), in the King James Bible, wherein reference is made to the fish, fowl, and beasts of the earth: "And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth."

CORRECT USAGE IN VARIOUS TRANSLATIONS

In other translations the word *fill* is used correctly, in the English translations as well as in other tongues. Here are a few quotations:

Smith and Goodspeed: Copyright 1931, by the University of Chicago.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them: And God said to them "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it"; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

Challoner-Douay Text:

Then God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it." Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle and all the animals that crawl on the earth.

Revised Standard Version: 1952:

And God blessed them, And God said to them. "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it."

American Baptist (Improved) Version: "According to the Masoretic Text."

And God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it."

The Septuagint Bible. This edition of the Bible was published in 1954 and is taken from the English translation of the Septuagint Bible which was translated by Charles Thompson, who was secretary of the Continental Congress of the United States, and recently revised and compared with the Septuagint text. The publishers state that this is the Bible that the Savior used and is the oldest version in existence of the pre-Christian Hebrew manuscripts:

Let us make man after our image and after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the cattle, and the whole earth, and all reptiles which creep on the earth. So God made man, After an image: Increase and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.

The 1585 Edition. This edition was printed by Christopher Barker, "Printer to the Queenes Majestie, 1585, before the issuing of the King James Version."

Thus God created ye man in his image: in the image of God created hee him: hee created them * male and female.

And God bleffed them, and God faid to them * Bring foorth fruite and multiplie and fill the earth, and fubdue it.

The "Breeches" Bible of 1587. "Translated according to the Ebrew and Greeks, and conferred with the beft tranflations dieuers languages."

And God bleffed them, and God faid to them, * Bring forth fruite and multiplie, and fill the earth and fubdue it.

Danish Translation:

Og Gud velsignede dem, og Gud sagde til dem: vorder frugtbare og mangfoldige, og opfylder Jorden.

And God blessed them, and God said to them: be fruitful and multiply, and fill up the earth.

Swedish Translation:

Och Gud v  lsignade dem; God sade till dem: Varen fruktsamma och f  r  jken eder, och uppfyllen jorden.

And God blessed them; God said to them be fruitful and multiply yourself, and fill up the earth.

French Translation:

Et Dieu les benit, et il leur dit: "Soyez fecons, multipliez, remplissez la terra et soumettez la."

And God blessed them, and said to them Be fruitful, multiply, and fill up the earth."

German Translation:

Und Gott segnete sie und sprach zu ihnen: Seid fruchtbar und mehret euch und f  llet die Erde.

And God blessed them and said to them: Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.

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The Apostle Paul And Genealogical Research

Question: "The Prophet Joseph Smith said, 'The greatest responsibility the Lord has laid upon us is to seek after our dead.' (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 356.) The Genealogical Society workers come to us saying that it is our duty to search the records of the dead and obtain all the genealogical information that we can, that we may go to the temples and do work for them. Now I would like to know how we can square this with the doctrine of Paul, as found in the epistles to Timothy and Titus, in which he condemns genealogical research. Is it because the work was not for Paul's day?"

Answer: The counsel given to Timothy and Titus by Paul and the commandment given by the Lord to Joseph Smith appear in conflict only when Paul's remarks are misunderstood. The Lord revealed to Joseph Smith the glorious principles of salvation for the dead who died without the opportunity to receive the gospel when they were on the earth. Elijah was sent to restore the sealing power by which families may be united eternally and to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse.(See [D. & C. 27:9](#).) Because of the restoration, the spirit of research has taken hold of thousands of persons in all parts of the civilized earth, and the Latter-day Saints have been commanded to prepare the records of their dead and go to the temples, there to perform vicariously all the ordinances of salvation for them. This promise was made through the prophets anciently as well as in this dispensation. The dead who will accept the work done for them shall receive eternal life.([D. & C. 1:1-3](#); *D.H.C.*, Vol. 3, p. 280; [Isaiah 42:7](#) and 61:1-2; [Malachi 4:5-6](#).)

THE LORD INSPIRED PEOPLE TO KEEP RECORDS

The Lord inspired people anciently to keep records and histories of their people. If there had been no genealogical records kept, we would be without a great fund of knowledge in relation to the nations of the past and their relationship to the people of this generation. Record-keeping of this kind has been a

common practice in almost all nations, especially was it so of the Israelites. Some of the most interesting and important records on which we rely are found in Genesis and the books of Moses in the Old Testament. The Lord commanded that a census be taken as the Israelites were about to enter the land of their inheritance. (Genesis, chapters 10-11; Numbers, chapters 1, 2, 3, and 16; 1 Chronicles, chapters 1-8.) If these records had not been kept, we would not have the genealogies of our Redeemer in Matthew and Luke. When the Jews returned from Babylon, after the captivity, they were judged out of the records, and those with clouded lineage were denied the privileges of the priesthood and the temple. (Ezra and Nehemiah.)

The keeping of genealogical records is essential to the accomplishment of the work assigned to the Latter-day Saints that they may become saviors on Mt. Zion by performing the ordinances for their dead. This would be impossible without records of our dead being available.

Many of the sayings of Paul and other prophets have come down to us in imperfect form due to faulty translations and misinterpretations. Perhaps we do not have the full text of Paul's instruction to Timothy and Titus. We may be sure, however, that he would not take a stand in opposition to the teachings of the prophets who went before him. Genealogical research must have been done in the days of Paul which he did not condemn, for salvation for the dead was practiced in his day, and he called attention to this fact, using it as an argument in favor of the resurrection. ([1 Corinthians 15:29](#).) However, there was no vicarious work done before the resurrection of our Lord. Paul's reference to "fables and endless genealogies" infers that he was condemning a practice that had been perverted, or he would not have called the practice "fables." ([1 Timothy 1:4](#).) We may conclude, then, that there was a practice among the Jews in which the preparing of genealogies was fraudulently done. Bible commentators so declare this to be the fact. Dr. Adam Clark in his *Commentary* calls attention to this fraudulent practice and gives the reason for it in the following words:

FRAUDULENT PRACTICES IN RECORDING GENEALOGIES

The Jews had scrupulously preserved their genealogical tables, till the advent of Christ; and the evangelists had recourse to them, and appealed to them in reference to our Lord's descent from the house of David: Matthew taking this genealogy of the *descending*, Luke of the *ascending* line. And whatever difficulties we may now find in these genealogies, they were certainly clear to the Jews; nor did the most determined enemies of the gospel attempt to raise one objection to it from the appeal which the evangelists had made to their own public and accredited tables. All was then *certain*; but we are told that Herod destroyed the public registers: he, being an Idumean, was jealous of the noble origin of the Jews: and that none might be able to reproach him with his descent, he ordered the genealogical tables, which were kept among the archives in the temple, to be burned. . . . From this time the Jews could refer to their genealogies only from *memory*, or from those imperfect tables which had been preserved in private hands; and to make out any regular line from these, must have been *endless* and uncertain. It is probably to this the apostle refers; I mean the endless and useless labor which the attempt to make out these genealogies, must produce; the authentic tables being destroyed. (*Clark's Commentary*, Vol. 4, p. 555, on Timothy 1:4.)

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